

THE BRIGHTEST FICTION MAGAZINE

SMITH'S

MAGAZINE

JUNE, 1911

15 CENTS



COMPLETE NOVEL BY VIRGINIA MIDDLETON,
SHORT STORIES BY HOLMAN F. DAY, EDWIN L. SABIN,
GRACE MARGARET GALLAHER, JAMES HAY, JR., ANNE
O'HAGAN, ELIZABETH NEWPORT HEPBURN AND OTHERS
PORTRAITS OF STAGE FAVORITES



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New Victor Records are on sale at all dealers on the 28th of each month

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

Ainslee's for June

Concerning Strawberries and Prunes

Once in his early boarding-house days when Eugene Field was dining with some of his more prosperous friends, large, luscious, red strawberries were passed.

Field mournfully shook his head.

"Why, don't you care for strawberries?" asked his host, with a trace of disappointment.

"Care for them?" echoed Field sadly. "That's just it. I'm afraid they'll spoil my taste for prunes."

Good reasoning, that. But if strawberries were always in season; if they cost no more than prunes—well, AINSLEE'S always is in season, and incidentally its price is lower than that of any other magazine of the same class.

The complete novel in June AINSLEE'S will be "The House of Peril," by MRS. BELLOC LOWNDES.

The color and sparkle of this little French town, the fortune teller's strange prophecy, the mysterious disappearance of Anna Olsen, the rivalry between her own countryman and the French count for the heart of the young American heroine, the big, black trunk in the house of peril—all go to make a tale of romance and mystery that well deserves a place in AINSLEE'S. And AINSLEE'S is "the magazine that entertains."

Sixteen short stories are scheduled for June, and they are, without exception, "AINSLEE short stories." This increase in number is made possible by the discontinuance, at the suggestion of many of our readers, of the serial feature.

"If a continued story is a good story," writes one subscriber, "as AINSLEE'S almost invariably have been, the reader is raised to a high pitch of interest, suddenly deserted, and asked to sustain this high pitch of interest through all the births, deaths, punctured tires, and household annoyances of the next three or four weeks. Let his interest once begin to flag, and by the time the next installment reaches him he is no longer where he last left off. In place of the serial give us more short stories. For all that we readers know it may be depriving us of some new MARGARETTA TUTTLE, an undiscovered JOSEPH LINCOLN, another KATE JORDAN, or some budding FRANK CONDON . . ."

The characters created by MARGARETTA

TUTTLE in her Nadine Carson stories would seem more like delightful well-bred people than mere fiction characters were it not that they are *always* entertaining, something that cannot be said of even the most brilliant of our friends in real life. "The Hour Between" is the title of the June story in this series.

FRANK CONDON has captured a little slice of that elusive something called spring, and has put it down on paper for us with all his usual unusual humor.

The daily papers are filled with news and rumors of dissension and fighting in Mexico. What is happening? What will happen? Probably nothing one-half so convincing, one-half so dramatic as "The Last Man," an absorbing story of the Mexican Sierras, by HERMAN WHITAKER.

"The Savage" is one of the most colorful and magnetic stories that F. BERKELEY SMITH has yet given us. "The Mirror on the Wall" has that inimitable charm that is expected from FANNY H. LEA, and "Miss Democracy" does credit even to KATE JORDAN.

Three stories of the West in this coming number are as varied as the great territory of which they are characteristic. ELLIOTT FLOWER'S amusing "silly-awss" Englishman, Alphabet Applegate, is at it again, this time in "The Flight of Beatrice." "Marooned on Tuscarora," by EDYTH A. ELLERBECK, is a dramatic story of a woman civil engineer, who combines masculine courage with feminine charm. "The Snow-blind Man," G. H. PRESTON'S stirring story of Alaska, deals with primitive justice, and the choice of a fugitive between the path of freedom and the human impulse to save a helpless human being.

Those who read CONSTANCE SKINNER'S powerful novel, "A Man and His Mate," in March, will welcome "Divorced," a short story, equally powerful, in this number.

OWEN OLIVER, F. T. COOPER, JANE W. GUTHRIE, SAMUEL GORDON, JOHNSON MORTON, and J. S. FLETCHER contribute the balance of the fiction. As a whole we feel that the June AINSLEE'S is well rounded, entertaining, and full of sparkle and life. We are almost satisfied with it.



HENRY C. ROWLAND

author of "The Pilot Fish," has written a new novel of romance, adventure, mystery, and humor, called "**The Dog With the Broken Tooth.**" The whole novel appears *complete* in the First June issue of

TWICE-A-MONTH *The Popular Magazine*

out on May tenth. THE POPULAR, with a circulation of over 400,000 copies per issue, is the biggest fiction magazine in the world. It contains nothing but fiction, and has all of the best fiction by the best authors. It is issued twice a month. The present number contains, besides the complete novel, great stories by George Pattullo, Roy Norton, Anna Katharine Green, C. E. Van Loan, A. M. Chisholm, Bertrand W. Sinclair, and others.

ON ALL NEWS STANDS MAY 10th

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

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Rate, 50c. a line, or \$2.61 1/4 a line, which includes AINSLEE'S and POPULAR Magazines, making a total of 4,000,000 readers—the cheapest and best Classified Advertising medium on the market. Next issue of SMITH'S closes May 8th

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The Oliver Typewriter Company originated "Printype." We control it. The Oliver Type-

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Address Agency Department

(107)

The Oliver Typewriter Company, 297 Oliver Typewriter Building, Chicago



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Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

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SMITH'S MAGAZINE

No. 3

A PUBLICATION FOR THE HOME

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YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION \$1.50

SINGLE COPIES 15 CENTS

Monthly Publication issued by SMITH PUBLISHING HOUSE, 79-89 Seventh Avenue, New York City.
 ORMOND G. SMITH, President, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York City; GEORGE C. SMITH, Secretary and Treasurer,
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Entered as Second-class Matter, at the New York Post Office, according to an Act of
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of Coca-Cola

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."


SMITH'S MAGAZINE

VOLUME 13

JUNE, 1911

NUMBER 3

PHOTOGRAPHIC ART STUDIES OF
STAGE FAVORITES



MISS ALICE DOVEY
-IN-
"THE PINK LADY"

PHOTO BY MARCEAU - N.Y.






Photo by White, N. Y.

MISS HAZEL DAWN
In "The Pink Lady"



Photo by White, N. Y.

MISS HAZEL DAWN
In "The Pink Lady"



Photo by White, N. Y.

MISS ALICE DOVEY
In "The Pink Lady"



Photo by White, N. Y.

MISS JULIETT DAY
In "Everywoman"



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MISS PATRICIA COLLINGE
In "Everywoman"



Photo by White, N. Y.

MISS LAURA NELSON HALL
In "Everywoman"



Photo by White, N. Y.

MISS EMILY STEVENS
In "The Boss"



Photo by Mifflin, Chicago

MISS CATHERINE CALVERT
In "The Deep Purple"



Photo by White, N. Y.

MISS JEANNETTE CLARK
In "Two Women"



Photo by Brown, N. Y.

MISS MAUD BURNS
In "Thais"



Photo by White, N. Y.

MISS ALICE BRADY
In "The Balkan Princess"



Photo by White, N. Y.

MISS ADA HOWELL
In "Two Women"



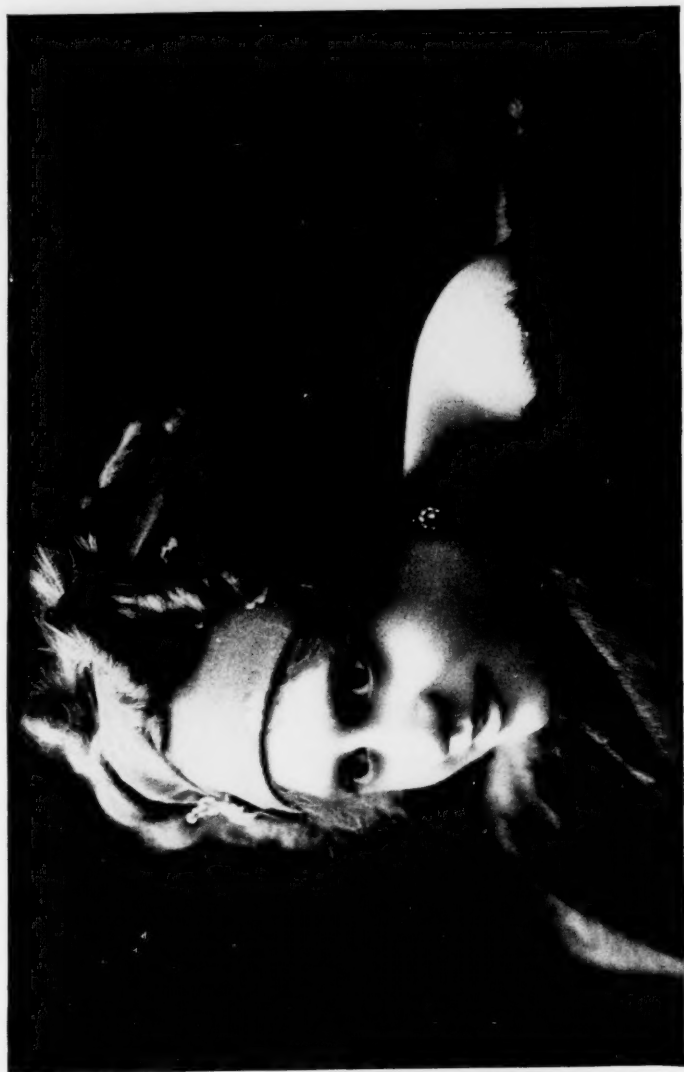
Photo by White, N. Y.

MISS MIZZI HAJOS
At the Winter Garden



Photo by Sarony, N. Y.

MISS KITTY GORDON
At the Winter Garden



Mlle. DAZIE
At the Winter Garden

Photo by White, N. Y.



The QUEST Virginia Middleton

ILLUSTRATED BY SIGURD SCHOU

CHAPTER I.

ALL that fraction of the population of Winterbury which esteemed itself as "society" was present one November afternoon in Mrs. Cartwright's drawing-rooms. The wide door, whose fanlights and moldings amateurs of Georgian architecture came from far to see, opened constantly to admit into the great hall that bisected the house those who constituted "the beauty and the chivalry" of the town—or, at any rate, its prosperity and respectability. The Cartwright ancestors looked severely out of their Puritan eyes upon the scene below them. Their dark, bent brows beneath their formidable wigs expressed their disapproval of the chatter that floated to them.

Winterbury rejoiced, did it, that Professor Cartwright and his wife had returned from his sabbatical year's holiday abroad? Sabbatical year, indeed! When did ignorance, folly, and sin take holiday, that their scholarly opponents should once in seven years absent themselves from the scene of the combat? So they seemed sternly to inquire of those who thronged the old house on Elm Street.

It was the new professor of history

who called Gladys Cartwright's attention to the grim portraits. She had come to a temporary lull in her hospitable business of dispensing chocolate at her cousin's home-coming, and the new professor, stranded for the moment near her, was struck by a curious resemblance between her young, rounded, charming face and that of a colonial judge, who, austere and sad, hung in the panel behind her.

"What do you suppose he thinks about all of this?" inquired Mr. McDougal, placing himself conversationally near Miss Cartwright, and indicating the judicial ancestor of the house of Cartwright by an inclination of his head.

Gladys' gray eyes traveled swiftly back from the door they had been watching, and, quickly glowing and bright, included her questioner and the portrait in a smiling glance. All the resemblance vanished. Mr. McDougal saw, appreciatively, that her lips dimpled deliciously at the corners, as he was sure the judge's had never done, even in babyhood; that her fine, fair skin showed the varying emotions of a moment in delicate fluctuations of color, too faint to be called blushes or pallors; that her very hair, too pale for

brown, too dull for gold, seemed to have an expressive quality of its own, with its wavy tendrils and little half curls. The judge, behind her, had no such vividness of life, of emotion; of that McDougal was immediately sure; and yet the lines of the girl's brow, the droop of her lips in that second of repose, had been wonderfully like those of the grave, tired face above the judicial robes.

"He?" laughed Gladys. "I suppose he thinks us all lost souls. Wasn't frivolity a crime almost worse than sin in his day? Poor old dear! He didn't have much fun himself."

"Less than the average allowance of his period?" inquired the new professor.

Gladys nodded.

"Much less. You see, he had to convict his own son of something—poor, old Colonial Brutus!"

Her eyes wandered again toward the door. McDougal wondered for whom she was watching. Some youth, of course! He smiled half pityingly. Poor young things, who had so much disillusionment before them!

McDougal had endured his disillusionments. He was thirty-eight, and he was done with watching doors. He was glad of it, and he felt sorry for the girl who had yet to learn the painful disproportion between the times the watched door admits the longed-for figure and the times that it spreads vacant and meaningless.

At the same time, he felt that he should like to administer a rebuke to the youth who kept Gladys Cartwright waiting. One of the students, he supposed—she was not more than twenty or twenty-one. She had probably set her momentary affections upon some hero of the football field. McDougal's own diversions, while obtaining his preliminary education, had been tutoring backward, or lazy, fellow students, waiting on table in a students' mess room, lighting the gas street lamps of his little college town, in the days before it had learned to meet darkness with sudden, simultaneous incandescence on all its streets. McDougal's training had given him no deep-seated

sympathy with heroes of the football field.

Gladys had dispensed more cups of chocolate, precariously topped by miniature mountains of whipped cream, while he indulged himself in his reflections. Now he saw a brighter color dye her cheeks and a deeper radiance gem her eyes as she looked toward the door. The awaited had arrived, then!

He turned to observe the recipient of the beautiful look of cordiality. But it was only a woman of fifty. He was too new a comer to Winterbury to know who she was, although he had the immediate perception that every older resident of the town must know her well. She had to perfection the air of the woman who has never been obliged to introduce or to explain herself. She smiled upon Gladys' brilliant, welcoming face with what McDougal resentfully felt was a look of patronage.

"No chocolate, my dear," she answered the girl's question. "When you are fifty and begin to be worried about your figure, you won't indulge in it, either, two hours before your dinner. I had expected to find Harold here, hovering about you to the distraction of all those who have not my reasons for abstaining from chocolate. Has he gone already?"

"He hasn't been here yet, Mrs. Lederlie," replied the girl. "Of course, he hates teas——"

"He has given up that pose since he knows how often he has to seek you at them," replied Mrs. Lederlie blandly. "I dare say something has detained him. Even if you weren't here, I am sure he would come on your cousin's account—he was always devoted to Professor Cartwright."

"He will probably manage to get in later," said Gladys evenly.

Lewis McDougal felt a compelling desire to know something of the Lederlies.

"Who is that extremely handsome, elderly woman talking to Miss Cartwright?" he asked a fellow member of the Winterbury College faculty, who was endeavoring to escape the rooms without encountering a wife whose de-

clared intention was to drag him to other teas this afternoon.

"That? Oh, that is Mrs. Amos Lederlie—Gladys' mamma-in-law-to-be. By the way, McDougal, if you see Mrs. Greer looking for me, will you tell her I remembered some papers I had to look over, and that I've gone home? And don't see her until I've effected my escape!"

McDougal nodded absently, forgetting even to smile appreciation of the traditional masculine attitude. So the lovely young girl was waiting for her betrothed husband! It was not the nebulous beginning of a brief romance which he had seen in her charming eyes; it was acknowledged, accepted love. And it was not for a student, a giant of the athletic association, that she waited, but for a man so far past the student stage that he could plan a home and ask a woman to share it.

He remembered that he had heard of Lederlie as a young man of charm and ability. Dimly he recalled some legend of student escapades, some story of faculty regret that the boy had not devoted his talents to intellectual pursuits on graduation. Well, the rewards of intellectual pursuits were long delayed; and with Gladys Cartwright waiting, McDougal did not wonder at young Lederlie's choice of a more swiftly remunerative occupation than scholarship.

He delayed his own departure until the rooms were thinning, and his long, awkward figure was taking on a look of uneasy permanency in them. He did not know many of the people, and he went about, while the Cartwrights were welcoming a sprinkling of late guests, or speeding parting ones, staring at the portraits as though he were absorbed in interest in the Cartwright forbears.

He wanted to see Lederlie, son of that graceful, classic, cold, unmotherly woman to whom he had felt an immediate antipathy, affianced husband of the young, radiant, vivid girl who had so attracted him. He knew that he was lingering for that purpose, and he admitted that he was playing the inquisi-

tive fool in so lingering; but he told himself, truthfully enough, that he indulged in very few vagaries, and that he had won the right to treat himself to an occasional caprice.

He was studying again the austere judge who had been obliged to convict his own son of crime, and was surreptitiously comparing his features with those of his far-off descendant, when Gladys' face suddenly blossomed like a flower. He followed the direction of her frank, glad eyes. A young man stood in the doorway—Mrs. Lederlie's son by his graceful, well-knit figure, his easy carriage; Gladys Cartwright's lover by the first glance of his eyes. Gladys Cartwright's lover—and yet not a happy man, as McDougal declared in the second's survey he took.

The newcomer greeted his hostess, exchanged some brief civilities with Professor Cartwright, and made his way toward Gladys.

"Have you brought an excuse for tardiness?" she demanded gayly. "Your mother's been gone these hours. Will you have chocolate? That's nice of you. I feel neglected and unpopular when people refuse my beverage."

"How soon can you break away from this?" Lederlie asked, in a low voice. "I want—I want you to take a little walk with me before you go home. Will you?"

"We can walk home," answered Gladys. "I'm afraid it's too late for any other rambling. I shan't more than make dinner, at best."

"No, I don't want to walk home," declared the young man. "I want you to walk with me to the wharf—won't you?"

There was such a stress of desire in his voice that Lewis McDougal, listening with one ear and all his attention to this conversation, while he gave the other ear and no attention at all to a drab little spinster who was avowing a love for chemistry, under the delusion that chemistry was his specialty, felt himself suddenly an eavesdropper. He moved abruptly away, leaving the lover of chemistry with a sentence suspended in mid-air. She always declared him

afterward an unfit person to be instructor of the young. "An unmannerly man of no antecedents, that's plain," was the dictum from which she could not be won.

He took an abrupt leave of the Cartwrights, after all his dawdling, and went back to the rooms which he occupied in the house of the widow of one of the old medical faculty, revolving in his mind the look on Harold Lederlie's face as he had stood in the doorway, glancing toward Gladys, and the note in his voice as he asked her to walk toward the wharf. There had been tragedy on the handsome young face, there had been tragedy in the intensity of the voice—of that he was sure. And how could tragedy be companion of these two in the flower of their attractive youth? He shook himself suddenly, and laughed aloud at the misty November sky, with an early-risen moon struggling to burst through its vapor.

"Lewis, you are old, old, my friend!" he informed himself. "Have you so utterly forgotten what it is to be young and in love? Have you forgotten that a letter unanswered, a glance unreciprocated, is matter for more tragedy than all the Wars of the Roses? Oh, happy time of daily despair and hourly catastrophe!"

So he put out of his thoughts the two who had absorbed him for the last hour, and, letting himself into the medical widow's comfortable abode, joined his two or three confrères at dinner, and later lost himself in the task of setting in order the notes for the volume he was to produce in the spring: "The History of the Progress of Society Toward Manhood Suffrage." It was an engrossing occupation, and in it he quite forgot the wharf, the haggard face of the young man, and the radiant one of the young girl.

CHAPTER II.

"Harold, you are as full of whims as a girl!" Gladys said, with a note half laughter, half question in her voice, as her cousin's door closed upon her and

her betrothed. "Will you tell me why to-night, of all nights, you feel impelled to walk down to the wharf? I shall be late for dinner, so will you—and that will make you late in coming to pay father your Wednesday evening visit!"

"I can't come to-night, Gladys—that's the reason I had to have these few minutes alone with you."

"Is anything the matter, dear?" Gladys' tone changed from mirthful protest and curiosity to something grave, sweet, reassuring.

"What should be the matter?" he answered, almost roughly.

"As far as I know, nothing at all. But—I'm a spoiled darling, Hal. You've never taught me to expect disappointment, and, since I was expecting you to-night, I thought something must be the matter to keep you away. That's all."

"Well, there is something the matter to that extent. I've got to meet Stockton and Daly at the bank for some extra work. There's been some careless bookkeeping, and the examiner is due upon us."

"Anything serious?"

"No—but you know what a lax, easy-going set they are, the officers and directors."

He drew her hand into his arm and held it tightly.

"Oh, Gladys, Gladys," he cried, with a break in his voice, "are you sure that you love me?"

"Of course I am, Harold! Why, dearest boy, what is the matter with you to-night? Of course, and of course I love you!"

"It was down by the wharf that you told me so for the first time. Do you remember?"

"Do I remember?" She scoffed at him softly. "Oh, no! I have so many more important things to recollect that I had entirely forgotten that. Goose!"

She pressed nearer to his side, and looked up into his eyes in the light of a street lamp. Her face, rosy with the autumn air and youth and love, shone upon him like a tender flower. He gazed at her hungrily, jealously.

"It was a wonderful sunset—you re-



"I want you to take a little walk with me before you go home. Will you?"

member—after a sullen day. A rending of the gray clouds by sheer gold and fire. And we looked at it together as if we were looking at a resurrection—it was life flaming out of dull death, that sunset—and then we looked at each other, and we knew! We knew that we were meant for each other, did we not, Gladys?"

"Yes," she whispered, her breath caught from her by the flood of feeling his words and manner aroused in her.

"And when two people are meant for each other, it does not matter what comes between, does it?"

There was a sort of savage jealousy in his voice.

"No," she whispered again. Then she shook herself, as though to rid herself of some oppression she could not easily

carry. "But, Hal, why are we talking like this? Instead of a cruel world bent upon separating us, who are meant for each other"—her words were soft—"every one is perfectly delighted with our finding it out for ourselves. They all thought they had found it out long before."

"I am not talking of people," he said. "But—of ourselves. Gladys, I should love you and long for you no matter what you had done."

"Well, I seldom do anything of a State's prison sort!" she retorted. He loosed her arm abruptly. She glanced at him in surprise. "I don't mean that I am very much good, Hal. I only mean that you and I are averagely nice people, and aren't likely to put each other's love to any dreadful test."

"And I am telling you," he persisted, "that mine would survive any test. No matter what you did, Gladys, no matter what, I should know the true, the real you under it all. I should never doubt. I should be faithful to you, wait for you, work for you. Ah, dearest, dearest, I am not worthy of you—I am so horribly unworthy! But I want to hear you say that you can forgive unworthiness—that you can love me in spite of it."

"Hal, you haven't been making love to some one else?"

She tried to laugh, but the intensity of his manner had affected her, and the laugh was half a gasp.

"Making love? No, you foolish child!"

"You managed to frighten me with your heroics a minute ago. Well, since your high crimes and misdemeanors are not of that kind, I can forgive them. Seriously, dear, of course neither of us is worthy of this beautiful thing that has happened to us, this loving each other, this planning a long, lovely life together. But you're as worthy as I am, I guess. And I love you, dear, with all my heart."

They had come to the old wharf, relic of the days when the river that ran by Winterbury's door was the avenue by which the produce from the country beyond came to the seaport city farther down. The pier had long been abandoned, and was useful chiefly to romantic young couples or persons with a passion for sketching. To-night, Gladys and Harold could hear the sound of the sluggish waters sucking at the ancient piles; farther along the shore the lights of newer wharfs sent wavering lines of misty light across the waves. Picnic Island, opposite the city, bulked vague and large in the misty half light of departed day and vaporous, young moon.

The two stood still, listening to the melancholy wash of the waters. A sudden sadness, a sudden loneliness, smote their young hearts.

"Oh, my dear!" the girl cried, seeking for his hands with her outstretched ones. "It would be too hard, too bleak,

too awful to live except for love. Thank God that we've got each other, whatever happens!"

It was her gentle defiance to all the menaces and mysteries of life that seemed gathered there on the pale waterside.

"Whatever happens!" he echoed her solemnly.

And then he bent and kissed her, not with that ardor of love with which she was familiar, but with a chill solemnity that seemed part of the lonely place and the uncertain, solitary evening.

They walked home without many words. She clung to his arm; she wanted to feel the close touch of companionship, that she might rid herself of the depression that had seized her at the river's edge. When they came up into the part of Winterbury which she knew best, with the friendly lights shining from many windows, gleaming across long, pleasant lawns, with the familiar college buildings grouped around the campus, insensibly her grasp relaxed a little. But Harold drew her hand back into the shelter of his arm, and held it there.

"This is the place where I feel loneliest, Glad," he told her, reading all her undefined emotions.

She glanced at him, inquiring. Lonely here—within sight of his own home and hers, and all the dear associations of his life. What did he mean? But she did not put her question into words. They turned into the drive toward her home.

"So I shan't see you again this evening?" she said, lingering, her latchkey in her hand, on the topmost of the little flight of steps.

"Not to-night."

"To-morrow?"

"I'll call you up—that is, I'll let you know later, if I may?"

"All right."

The peculiar look in his eyes still held hers captive. For a full second they looked at each other, love and pain in one gaze, love and question in the other. Then, with a half sigh, she turned, and in another instant the bright hall had engulfed her. He paused for an in-

stant. Then he stooped, and kissed the doorknob where her fingers had rested.

CHAPTER III.

One may be the most modern of young women, the most free from ancient habits of coquetry, from ancient habits of suspicion, and yet some situations may find one the slave of sex traditions. Had any one discussed the abstract proposition with Gladys Cartwright, she would undoubtedly have declared that for an engaged girl to delay in asking her affianced any question "because it was his place" to give the information unquestioned, was an antique sort of folly. Didn't an engagement imply frankness, candor—all the attributes that go with complete trust? Of course, a girl should ask what she wanted to know of her lover, as simply, as directly, as another man would demand information of him.

Nevertheless, on the day after she had walked to the wharf with Harold, she refrained from telephoning to him to ask if he were coming in to see her some time during the day. And no message came from him.

By evening she had worked herself into a state of indignation over his remissness. Of course, it went without saying that she would rather see him than any one else in Winterbury—it would be idle to deny what was implied in the fact that she had promised to marry him. But he should not presume to grow lax because of that. It might be that she would have engagements for the evening; it might be that she would like to make engagements, provided his work with Stockton and Daly were to continue again this evening. It was only courteous that he should let her know.

She made up many charges against him in her mind, and then rebutted them eloquently in the character of his advocate. But she did not telephone either to his mother's house or to his office in the bank to learn whether or not it was his intention to visit her in the evening. Sometimes she declared to herself that her abstention was due to a high-minded

desire not to complicate his work by intrusion, sometimes she admitted that it was due to her sense that he ought to "do the calling up."

The evening passed miserably enough. She had no word from him. Her father, who had given up evening cases, was deep in cataloguing his collection of the butterflies of America, and did not observe the fact of her restlessness or of Harold's absence. When she went to her room at half-past eleven, she was thoroughly awake, feverishly so. She heard the chimes on the North Church, half a block away, sound every quarter of an hour until dawn. Then she fell asleep, and did not stir again until nearly ten o'clock.

"The doctor had an early call, Miss Gladys," said the housemaid when she burst into the dining room half an hour later, full of remorseful explanations of her unhousewifely behavior. "He had his coffee at half-past six, and won't be back until office hours; and it seemed a pity to wake you for nothing in particular."

Gladys smiled her thanks and appreciation of the housemaid's thoughtfulness, and seated herself behind the ancient coffee urn in which the women of her family had made coffee for many generations. Back of her, a Sheraton sideboard, as ancient as the urn, lent the soft luster of its old mahogany to the gleam of silver and the leaping light from the fireplace that vied with the morning sun in brightness. The girl favored the charming room with a look of affection. Sleep had banished the fretful sense of wounded dignity she had had the night before. She included all the world, the inanimate objects by which she was surrounded as well as the kindly world of human beings, in her fondness.

She ran through her mail. It was moderately interesting. A letter from a college friend married and settled in Winnipeg, two or three invitations, a call to a committee meeting, an announcement of a course of French lectures—Winterbury prided itself upon the ease with which it could muster an audience for discourses in foreign

tongues. Then she turned toward the morning paper, which her father's absence had left altogether at her disposal.

The *Winterbury Gazette* was a sheet of conservative traditions. It was seldom that the dignity of its front page was marred by a cut or that its modest headlines extended across more than one column. As its chief owner gravely said, it had announced the fall of Sumter without trespassing upon two columns, and he seriously doubted whether it would ever have any information more worthy of a spread head than that. So, while his associates grumbled, and his heirs awaited a chance at a free hand, and his circulation fell off, the *Gazette* continued to make its perfectly respectable daily appearance untainted by the journalistic bad taste about it.

But this week Colonel Mabie was in Hot Springs nursing a gentlemanly attack of gout, and his managing editor had ventured upon a startling innovation. Across two columns, in very black though not unduly large type, ran a headline; and the columns below it were darkened by an alleged portrait. Gladys gave a little smile of astonishment at the general effect—she knew the colonel and his managing editor—before her eyes conveyed to her mind the precise message of the picture and the print.

PROMINENT YOUNG WINTERBORIAN ACCUSED OF EMBEZZLEMENT

HAROLD LEDERLIE A FUGITIVE

And then in smaller type there was the information that the young vice president of the Winterbury City Bank had disappeared just as defalcations of his, amounting to twenty thousand dollars, had been discovered. And the directors issued their customary reassurance to the depositors in regard to the full ability of the bank to meet the loss.

All this Gladys did not see at first. Harold's name, his photograph, the word "embezzlement" were all that she beheld. Though they stunned her, she did not rightly grasp their significance. She was in the state of a person, felled and half unconscious from a blow, who

does not apprehend what has happened to him. She sat in the bright, orderly room, the paper outstretched before her, her hand frozen upon it, the half smile with which she had greeted the innovation in the paper's policy stiff upon her face.

Above the sideboard behind her, the portrait of her great-great-grandmother hung, simpering upon the scene. Gladys had been held to be like the honorable dame, who had been esteemed a beauty in her generation, but now there was a grotesque and horrible unlikeness between the two faces, one with its unchanging look of pride and self-satisfaction, the other with a look that seemed as little likely to change, of overmastering horror transfixing a smile half formed.

By and by, as a person smitten by a physical force shudders back to a dazed consciousness of the events that preceded his stupefaction, Gladys shuddered back to life. Her mind grasped the import of the headlines; she read them all. From the vaults to which Harold and only one other officer had access, securities had been removed—the second man had been in Europe for six months. On the eve of an official discovery of the theft, Harold had disappeared.

She forced herself to read through the paragraphs that followed. Written as news only, yet the sentences contained judgment, criticism. It was pointed out that Harold's rapid advancement in the bank had been due to a system of favoritism. To be sure, his father had been one of its directors a quarter of a century before, and in its history had once proved of great service to it, lending it money to tide over a crisis; but that had been twenty years ago. Afterward, Amos Lederlie had lost a great part of the fortune which he had used to help the Winterbury City Bank through an emergency. He had died fifteen years since, leaving his widow and his son but little more than they needed for their support.

It had been on account of his father that young Lederlie, leaving Winterbury College in his junior year, had

been shoved ahead, passing older men—men trained by years of experience in the banking business, men of tested probity.

Gladys brushed her hand across her forehead, as though to brush some cobweb from her brain. Why this tone of personal animosity toward Harold? Ah, she had it, she had it! Of course! The whole, stupid libel was inspired, if not written, by Godfrey, the managing editor. Godfrey had a double score to settle with Harold—she, Gladys, had refused to marry him; and his brother, Sam Godfrey, had been one of those in the bank whom Harold's rapid rise had offended.

The whole thing was clear to her now, and she essayed a contemptuous laugh that refused to come. If Colonel Mabie had been at home, of course such a thing would never have been printed, she told herself—dear, old Colonel Mabie, her father's friend, and hers, and Harold's; a gentleman, a man who would not lend his property to slander—who would not imperil his property by such libel.

But—Edwin Godfrey was a seasoned newspaper man, and, unless he had gone insane, he would not publish such a thing as this without at least an apparent foundation upon which to rest it. She must see other papers—those newer, more sensational sheets which did not pollute Doctor Cartwright's house. Of course, the whole thing was a blunder, an absurdity so utter that she could almost—almost!—laugh at it; but she must know whether it was a general absurdity or merely a spiteful, personal one before she called Harold up on the telephone to tell him how she had laughed over this ridiculous thing. She pressed the button beneath the table.

Nora was a long time in answering the summons. She pressed the button again impatiently, and before its buzzing had died away she started toward the butler's pantry. She was no longer white, dazed, stunned; she was a flaming vision of outraged pride.

Nora presented herself before she had reached the pantry door—a scared-looking Nora in her pink print. She

was not a newspaper reader herself, and it would have interested her as much to spend the ante-breakfast half hour in reading one of the doctor's tomes as to spend it on Colonel Mabie's respectable repository of news. But, since she had uncovered the dish of bacon and eggs before her young mistress and had placed the toast rack adjacent to her hand, the butcher's boy had called for orders—and he had unfolded a tale. Moreover, he had supported it by unfolding, also, the *Trumpet and Clarion*. No wonder she came slowly, frightenedly at Gladys' imperious summons.

"Nora, will you please send out at once and buy all the morning papers except the *Gazette*, which I have?" commanded Gladys.

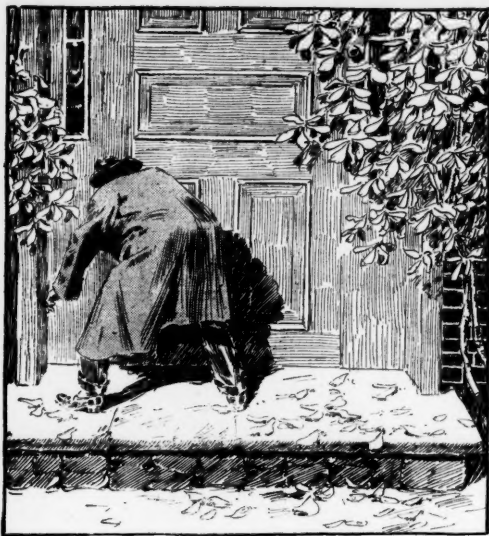
"Yes'm. Where shall I send, please, Miss Gladys?" faltered Nora.

"To the news stand on the corner," replied the girl, permitting Nora to read her surprised rebuke at the foolish question in her manner.

"Yes'm—of course, ma'am," Nora chattered, and escaped the dining room.

To Gladys every second was interminable. The maid had scarcely reached the kitchen and agreed with the cook that the best plan would be to declare the news stand at the corner sold out of papers before Gladys herself appeared. The butcher's boy fled, orderless, leaving his *Trumpet and Clarion* behind him on the kitchen table. It lay there—an extra edition, that had been sent out damp from the presses—and smeared across the whole top were great red letters declaring Harold Lederlie an embezzler and a fugitive. Beneath, there was a spreading picture of him, and beside him one of Gladys herself. "The Embezzler and the Young Woman He Was to Marry Next January!" shrieked the caption beneath the two photographs, which were inclosed in a heart-shaped frame.

"Have you been wasting your time on this stuff?" demanded Gladys contemptuously. She tore it across and threw it into the range. "You had better occupy yourselves more profitably. Nora, I came down to say that I don't want those papers, after all."



He stooped and kissed the doorknob where her fingers had rested.

She marched out of the kitchen again, her head held high on her slender neck, the bright, proud, angry color flaming in her cheeks. The two servants made some murmur as she passed out of the room, and then looked at each other.

"She don't believe it!" cried the cook. "You'll see—she'll never believe it!"

"She'll believe it if it's so," declared Nora. "Miss Gladys is nobody's fool, even if she is in love. I shouldn't wonder but what she'd go into a convent—or a decline."

"If she was one of us," said the cook, "she'd not have time to be goin' into convents or declines, either; she'd have her livin' to get, an' she'd go to see him in State's prison——"

"They haven't got him there yet, an' I hope they never will," Nora interrupted hotly. "Say, cook, what do you suppose he was doin' with all that money?"

"Maybe he never took it at all."

"Then why does he run away?"

"Maybe he didn't run away. Maybe the real thief kidnaped him so as to make it look like he ran away," impro-

vised cook, who had an imagination, and who developed it upon bloodcurdling literature.

Meantime in her room Gladys was carefully pinning her hat upon her soft-brown locks. She could not trust her voice at the telephone; she must go to his mother's at once, and find out the truth that underlay this wild fantasy—this nightmare.

CHAPTER IV.

Before the house she heard an automobile snort itself to a standstill. The hands that were raised to pin her hat fell limp by her sides. All her soul, all her hopes, and her unacknowledged fears crowded to her wide eyes. It was Harold, come to tell her that she was crazy that all the world was crazy; it

was Harold in the modest car that they had selected together not a month ago—the one which she was to learn to drive as well as he—the comfortable, dear little car. He had wanted a more magnificent one, but she had restrained the extravagant ambition.

She waited tensely for his reverberating ring to echo through the house. Instead, she heard a latchkey fumbling in the lock. The door opened, and her father's slow footfall sounded in the hall. She had forgotten her father. She had forgotten his early call, his absence from the house. Of course it had been his neat, little, physician's motor car that had come to a pause outside. She was abysmally disappointed. She had the sensation of falling down endless depths.

Her father was coming slowly up the stairs—age and weariness in his tread. She recalled her fainting spirit, her fleeing courage, and went to the landing at the head of the stairs to meet him. When she saw how bowed his shoulders seemed, how ashen his face, she drew her own figure more erect, and the color

of battle flamed across her face. Doctor Cartwright looked up and beheld her. A deeper sorrow, a deeper pity darkened his old eyes.

"My dear," he said tenderly. "My dear."

He paused then. He had always admitted that the new generation was beyond him. He did not know how to approach it when the deeper things of life were in question; books, politics, golf, pictures, the state of musical appreciation in America; on such topics as these he felt that he and the age which followed him spoke a common language; but when it came to life and love and death and sacred sorrow, he had a vocabulary crystallized so many years ago that he never dared to use it with these assured, sapient youngsters. So he stared sadly at his proud, beautiful young daughter, and murmured his ineffective "my dear."

She did not volunteer to help him. With a feeling almost hostile she awaited his admission that he had seen and had been affected by the ridiculous tale.

"Gladys, I wish your mother were alive. She would know what to do," said the doctor helplessly.

And Gladys recalled, as though a knife were plunged through her, that it was with those very words he had given his halting assent to her engagement a year and a half ago. He had not quite approved of it; but he had not known how to deny her her heart's desire. He had only stipulated for delay.

"I suppose," replied Gladys, more hardened still by his words and the recollection they aroused, "that you have seen that absurd thing in the morning papers. I know that you do not really care for Harold, father; but I am sure you do not allow a personal feeling—such as I dare say you would have had for any man I might have fallen in love with—to make you unjust. Of course, you know that it is a frightful slander, a frightful, frightful lie!"

"My dear," said the doctor again, "let us go into your room for a few minutes. I must talk with you."

She turned from the landing on which

she had met him, and led the way into her room, a pretty room, wide and fresh and charming with its rose-flowered cretonnes, its well-polished, dark woods, its photographs and girlish mementos.

"Gladys, my daughter," said the old man, sitting heavily in the armchair near the fireplace, "I did not come home to you without having first investigated, as far as was possible, the sources of this report. It met me in the house to which I was called. I have been to the bank. I have seen Hinsdale, the first vice president. He says that there is no question at all about the defalcation. The only question is as to the amount. It may be larger than at first appeared. They have cabled for Donohue. He ought not to have been away for so long. He is taking the first steamer home. I am afraid that there is no question about the situation, my dear. You see—for Harold to become a fugitive was for him to confess. You see that, do you not, my poor, little girl?"

"No," Gladys' voice and manner were obstinate. "Moreover, I haven't the least notion that Harold is a fugitive. May not a man leave Winterbury—even granted that he has left Winterbury—for two days without being thereby convicted of all the crimes unearthed during his absence? If Harold is not in town, it is because he has perfectly legitimate business elsewhere. Of course, if he has gone away, he will return the minute that he hears of this—this—I haven't the word to characterize it fitly."

"Do you know where he is?"

Doctor Cartwright looked hopeful for the second. Perhaps Harold had gone away on legitimate business; perhaps his fiancée knew what it was and where it was; perhaps it was some hideous mixture of blunder and coincidence, and no crime at all that blackened Harold's fame for the hour. He hung upon her answer, but her clouding face gave it before she spoke.

"I don't know. I haven't seen him since the night before last, when he walked home with me from Caroline's tea. But—do you call him a thief because of that?"

"Oh, my dear!" sighed the doctor wearily. Why wouldn't his lovely daughter be reasonable?

"If he is away from home, I dare say his mother knows where he is," went on Gladys, conscious of the weakness of her last sally of defense.

"Hinsdale says that she denies all knowledge of his whereabouts. She is completely prostrated—can see no one. You see, my dear, even his mother has not your faith in him—even his mother!"

"She is a cold, selfish, vain woman!" cried Gladys hotly, the hitherto unspoken belief of her heart finding expression at last. "She has never given up a thing for any human being, she has never been a true mother to him. It was she who insisted upon his leaving college before he was through. She wanted more money to spend. She is a luxury-loving thing, cold and conceited and spoiled. She has never liked our engagement because it was going to end in a few less dollars for her to spend on her furs and her laces and her masques. She is just a charming shell of a woman, and there is nothing warm and alive and human inside of the shell! She always collapses when there is the slightest disagreeable thing to do. Of course she is prostrated—she welcomes every chance to be prostrated. But even she can't believe this thing!"

"I agree with a great deal that you have said concerning Mrs. Amos Lederlie," answered the doctor slowly. "I agree with a great deal of it. She is luxury-loving, extravagant, unused to the discipline of denial. I think that my poor, old friend, Amos Lederlie, found that there was not in her much substantial basis for married happiness. He was much her senior. I think and have always thought that she married him for his money. Yes, I think you are right about Mrs. Lederlie. And—Harold is not unlike his mother."

"Father!"

"That was the real reason for my hesitation to give my consent to your engagement, Gladys, dear. Harold certainly inherits his mother's extreme good looks. He certainly inherits some

of her tastes for luxury. I had seen to what a pass of wretchedness the mother had brought as good a man as I ever knew. Do you wonder that I hated to give my girl to that mother's son?"

"You seem to forget, sir, that Harold was the son of your friend, also. I—I can vouch for the warmth of his heart."

"My dear, the love of a young man for the young woman to whom he is attracted at the mating period of life has nothing in common with that steady, generous warmth of feeling which is the finest attribute of humanity. Many a hot-blooded man is a very cold-hearted man."

"While we are here, discussing in this way, as if life, and happiness, and Harold's honor were not in the balance outside, I suppose there is nothing being done——"

A rap upon the door. Nora, very scared-looking, presented herself at the threshold.

"If you please, a young man from the *Trumpet and Clarion*, Miss Gladys, ma'am, and he says the *Trumpet and Clarion* would be glad to give you all the space you need to reply to the attacks upon Mr. Lederlie in this morning's papers——" She broke off, gasping.

"I will see the kind young man from the generous *Trumpet and Clarion*," declared the doctor, with grim alacrity.

The sound of a reverberating front door three seconds later gave evidence that he had effectually seen the young man. Gladys realized, with a faint desire to smile, that he had welcomed the interruption. The clock on her mantelshelf chimed gayly—the door of his office closed. She knew that he would be glad to plunge into his work, into that which he understood, effecting at least a temporary escape from all the wretched, unfamiliar realm of the tragic emotions. She was not surprised when Nora came upstairs again.

"Doctor Cartwright says, Miss Gladys, that he finds several people waitin' for him already. He would like to talk with you after his office hours, but will you please excuse him now?"

"Thank you, Nora," replied Gladys lifelessly.

The maid's kind eyes filled with impulsive tears.

"Oh, Miss Gladys, if there was only something we could do for you!" she cried, and then, frightened at her temerity, backed hastily toward the door.

But Gladys looked at her kindly.

"There is something you can all do for me, Nora," she said. "It is one of the hardest things in the world to do, too."

"There's nothing too hard," declared the fervent Nora.

"It is to believe, as I do, that Mr. Lederlie is the victim of a great blunder, a great mistake—and perhaps of a little jealousy and malice, also. It is to believe that he can and will explain everything."

"Oh, as for that, Miss Gladys," responded Nora, with every appearance of conviction, "we all do. We said so this morning in the kitchen—there's never a question about that. But—couldn't you let me get you a glass of sherry and a biscuit, Miss Gladys? Or a cup of coffee?"

"No thank you, Nora. And if the doctor asks for me before I come in, will you please say that I shall be back for luncheon?"

"You're never going out, miss?"

"I certainly am, though," replied Gladys defiantly. "Why, Nora, do you—when you have just told me how you, too, believe in Mr. Harold—do you expect me to stay indoors and hide my face, as though I doubted him?"

"Take your muff, Miss Gladys," begged Nora, in a subdued voice. "An'—an'—it's very cold out. Won't you have a veil, ma'am?"

"I will not!"

Gladys almost snapped out her refusal of the well-meant suggestion. She looked at herself critically in the wide mirror above her dressing table. Courage, pride gleamed in her eyes, incarnadined her cheeks. She still wore a face which she dared to show to all of Winterbury, which she meant to show, without loss of time, to Harold's mother.

CHAPTER V.

For all her high resolve to call at once upon Harold's mother, and with that lady to do battle for his sake, to inspire her with trust, and pride, and patience, Gladys did not find it easy to go at once to the Lederlie house, a quarter of a mile away from her own, on the same elm-bordered street. She had always been a little in awe of Mrs. Lederlie, despite her understanding of the fundamental principles of the older woman's character. The words that had flowed so freely from her lips that morning, in conversation with her father, had embodied opinions she had carefully repressed.

She had wanted the handsome and fascinating lady—all the world of Winterbury admitted Mrs. Lederlie's beauty and charm—to care for her. She had wanted to thaw the pretty crust of ice which glitteringly enveloped her prospective mother-in-law, and to find a mother's heart somewhere beneath the rainbow scintillations of the surface. Her failures were complete and frequent; but she had always recovered from them to nurse the same hopes anew.

But to-day things were different. Harold, by some blunder—oh, yes, by some blunder, some blunder, she repeated passionately to herself—was in an intolerable position in men's eyes; and his mother, instead of helping him by the composure, the assurance, of her bearing, was hourly injuring him. And she, Gladys, must force this view of the case upon Mrs. Lederlie; must by some superhuman strength instill into the other woman belief, and determination, and the high attributes of love. And to do it, she must summon all her own forces; and she must quell the voice within herself that kept reminding her of her last talk with Harold.

"Not worthy—not worthy!" But she herself had used the same words. Who on earth was worthy of the deep joy of love?

"No matter what you did, no matter what"—the remembering voice went on repeating the words—"I should still be-

lieve in the true, real you under it all. I should be faithful. I should wait."

Oh, why, why had he talked like that? Why, if he had no secret knowledge of a situation approaching that should put her love to the utter test? But she must not remember those passionate, pitiful words. They weakened her.

She walked along a side street in which she did not know many of the residents. There were some children below the school age playing in the autumn sunshine. There were one or two busy gardeners raking leaves into heaps and burning them. The blue smoke curled before her eyes. She inhaled its sharp fragrance. One or two women, with deep-rooted love of their gardens, were out tying straw around tender plants. It was all almost incredibly peaceful and ordinary.

Out of one of the well-kept houses a man came briskly. Gladys looked at him unrecognizingly. He turned in her direction, and still she looked at him unknowingly. As he approached, she saw that his lean, lined face reddened darkly as his hand went half hesitatingly toward his hat. She did not recall his identity; but her head inclined automatically in response to his half-defined salute, which then became a full one. He passed her, still with that dark, embarrassed flush upon his face. Some one who knew her, some one who had read the morning papers, she supposed, and who felt a sense of social dismay at meeting her face to face. Then she heard the receding footsteps turn and hasten after her.

"Miss Cartwright," began a hesitating voice at her shoulder, and she turned to meet the kindly gaze of the stranger. "You probably do not remember me. I met you the day before yesterday at your cousin's. I'm Lewis McDougal, a newcomer to Winterbury College."

"Oh, yes; of course, Mr. McDougal," murmured Gladys apologetically. "There were so many new faces that afternoon. You will pardon my not connecting yours at once with your name."

"Miss Cartwright, you will forgive the intrusion of an absolute stranger. I

know that you are in deep trouble this morning. If I can assist you in any way——" He broke off, reddening again. "I must sound very absurd," he continued. "Here you are in the place which has been your home for I don't know how many generations, surrounded by lifelong friends—and here am I, a stranger, offering you sympathy and service. Please try to overlook the presumption of it and believe in its sincerity."

There was such a note of humbleness in the close of the little speech that it touched Gladys' heart and brought the tears—she had not known how dangerously near the surface they were—to her eyes.

"It doesn't seem presumptuous to me; it seems kind," she told him. "I am in trouble, and it is not"—she silenced the undermining voice of memory—"easy to bear, even though I know—I know"—she defied him to doubt her assurance—"that it will be of the briefest possible length. Of course, it is all some incredible blunder! It could all be righted in a moment, if only Mr. Lederlie did not happen to be away. It is unfortunate that he should be; but as soon as he returns——"

"Exactly," agreed McDougal heartily. "When does he get back? I should be glad to be one of those to meet him——" Then he broke off, for the girl's face showed that Lederlie's return was an indefinite event. "But, of course," he went on glibly, "he is unlikely to know of this hue and cry. Our Winterbury happenings will not be very conspicuously chronicled in the larger cities. Have you telegraphed him?"

Gladys looked straight before her. She did not trust herself to meet his friendly eyes.

"I do—I do not know where he is," she said finally. "He—I suppose it was a sudden summons from the city. I have not seen him since the night before last. He walked home with me from Mrs. Cartwright's tea."

McDougal recalled the face and the voice he had loitered at the Cartwrights to see and to hear—the look and voice of tragedy. He remembered how he

had invented sentimental reasons for any hint of tragedy in the man who occupied the desirable position of betrothed husband to the vividly sweet and lovely creature who had so attracted him. With a sudden heaviness of heart, for her sake, he felt now that the reasons were not primarily sentimental.

"And he said nothing then about any call out of the city?"

He tried to keep his voice free from portentousness; but he felt that it was a veritable croak. Gladys shook her head. They walked on in silence for a few steps.

"Well," said McDougal finally, forcing a note of commonplace courage into his manner, "he will surely be back to-day, and the whole thing will be straightened out. I only wanted you to know that if, by any unlikely chance, I could be of any use to you, I should esteem it a privilege to be allowed to be."

Gladys' gray eyes darkened with gratitude.

"I think you mean it," she said, with her frank air; "and, though I hope and believe that there will be nothing for any one to do after a day or two—except to apologize to Mr. Lederlie—still, I thank you. And if I do need any one"—her eyes swam suddenly in tears—"if I do need any one, I shall be glad to remember what you have said. Somehow—it's terrible—but one's family, one's old friends, are always so concerned about one—and that isn't the question at all!"

"I understand. They do miss the real issue, in their desire to spare one pain. Good-by. I have a lecture at twelve, and must run across lots."

She walked on, after he had left her, with a securer sense of courage. At the corner she remembered for what she had come out. She was on her way to see Harold's mother. She must go

there now—she felt almost equal to the ordeal.

The maid at Mrs. Lederlie's door was uncertain as to whether Mrs. Lederlie was at home or not; but her pretense of doubt gave way before: "Oh, yes, Mrs. Lederlie is at home this morning, and I am very sure that she will see me. I am Miss Cartwright, you know."

"Yes'm, I know; but Mrs. Lederlie



"If I can assist you in any way—" He broke off, reddening again.

is not at all well, and is to be denied to every one. So many people have been here from the papers, miss, that she simply can't see any one."

Gladys laughed.

"Well, I'm not from the papers. You know that. Tell her that it is most important I should see her."

Her laugh and assured air put some courage into the girl's shrinking spirit, and she started the ascent of the stairs toward her mistress' room.

"She can see you, Miss Cartwright, for a few minutes—but please don't stay long. She's had the doctor, and his orders were perfect quiet. But for just a few minutes." That was the confused message.

Gladys ascended the stairs, for the first time in her experience of them without a slight tremor of fright. Hitherto she had always gone to see a queen-mother sort of a person, a great lady to be conciliated, won—by flattery, perhaps, if more honest methods did not prevail; but to-day she walked boldly up to teach an imperfect mother her duty.

Mrs. Lederlie's room was becomingly darkened. She sat up in her bed, propped against pillows, her silvered dark hair gleaming through a coquettish cap of lace—lace and lawn and ribbons about her firm, round throat and her statuesque shoulders. She held out a white, slender hand to Gladys.

"Oh, my poor child, my poor child!" she breathed. "Have you come to reproach me for the wreck of your life?"

"The wreck of my life? What do you mean, dear Mrs. Lederlie?" inquired Gladys, with a good deal of suavity. "I don't consider my life wrecked because my promised husband is the victim of some mix-up in his business."

"Then you don't know?" murmured the elder lady, with infinite pathos in her voice.

"Don't know what?"

"Oh, my dear, don't make me say the words to you! Don't force it upon me, his mother—I shall not forgive Harold this! If he has left it to me to break the truth to you, I cannot do it. I will not do it! Oh, Rosalie, my salts, please!"

While Mrs. Lederlie's maid supplied her with aromatic salts and sympathetic murmurs, Gladys sat with her face grown very stern. There was fright in it, but more of judgment. When the maid had withdrawn to the dressing room next the bedroom, where, Gladys saw, in an uncomprehending flash, she was busied with trunks, she drew closer to the bed, and addressed her lover's mother.

"Dear Mrs. Lederlie, forgive me if I am impertinent; but I think that you are doing Harold a great wrong. We cannot wonder if other people are badly impressed by the look of things against him, if we, we who know him, seem to be impressed by them. Please try to forgive me if I am impertinent; but I do think you should show a trustful, proud face to the world. Of course, nothing we can do can alter the fact of his innocence, and that must appear as soon as investigations are made; but meantime think how his reputation may suffer! I walked through the streets to-day just to show myself—just to tell the world that I had no reason to stay behind closed windows and doors. I don't mean to be impertinent, but it does seem to me that that is the only way in which we can help him now, until he comes back and things are cleared."

The fine eyes of the woman on the pillows surveyed the girl keenly. A slender hand reached out and clasped one of hers.

"My dear, if only my wretched boy could have been worthy of us!" said Harold's mother, in the full-throated voice of one paying the final, complete tribute.

Gladys' fingers grew a little cold in hers.

"He is worthy of—me, at any rate," she declared.

"Ah, my dear, he is not—neither of you, so courageous, and spirited, and strong, nor of me and my mother's love. Gladys, what the papers are saying this morning is—see that the door of the dressing room is shut, will you, my sweet girl?—is true. He admitted it himself to me the night before last."

Afterward, it seemed to Gladys that she had, almost from the moment when first the hideous headlines, the blotted, blurred picture had met her unprepared eyes a few hours before, been bracing her spirit to bear this blow; afterward, it seemed to her that, from the first, she had known that she would hear his mother declare her lover a thief, and that his mother would give her lover himself as her authority for the awful statement. At the bottom of her soul

she felt that she had known it all along. All the brave pretense, all the gallant make-believe with which she had been fortifying herself, intoxicating herself, through the morning, seemed suddenly to evaporate.

"He told you so?" Her voice was without inflections, but very quiet.

"My poor Gladys, yes."

"Will you please tell me all about it?"

"It is abominable of Harold to leave me such a task!" exclaimed the lady of the laces, reclining rather more heavily on her pillows. "But you have a right to know everything, my poor girl; and, since he was too great a moral coward to tell you himself, there is nothing for it but for me to tell you. That is Harold all over—selfish through and through, perfectly indifferent to what this moment may mean to me, provided only that he escapes the purgatory. Gladys, my dear, what time is it? Twenty after? I should have taken my tonic a quarter of an hour ago. Would you mind? Thank you, dearest girl. I really ought not to be going through with this harrowing scene with you; but I must, though I don't dare think what Doctor Arthur would say to me. He absolutely forbade my seeing a living soul. Of course, I did not tell him what I am obliged, through Harold's unspeakable remissness, to tell you. No. I called him in last night when something Hinsdale telephoned to me made me realize that the whole business would be town talk to-day. But I didn't say a word to Doctor Arthur except that I had had a horrible shock. Not a word. Gladys, what we women suffer in silence!"

There was a moment of such silence as perhaps women suffer in— Mrs. Lederlie wordless while she sniffed again her *sal volatile* and closed her lids upon her fine brown eyes, and Gladys wordless because it seemed to her that the next sound which passed her lips must be a shriek of madness or the gasp of death.

"Where was I?" began the mother again. "Oh, yes, at Harold's selfishness. Well, I need not dwell upon that. You have experienced it, Gladys, now in its

full force, and I dare say you had had plentiful suggestions of it throughout your engagement. His father over again, my dear!"

"Mrs. Lederlie," cried the girl, strained almost beyond endurance, "will you please tell me what Harold said to you that you should believe this—this story in the morning's papers?"

"Yes, I will tell you." The invalid spoke with a certain sharpness at variance with the half-affected tones which she had used before. "I will tell you chronologically. He came home to dinner rather late the night before last—it was the day of Caroline Cartwright's tea, if you remember?"

Gladys signified that she did remember.

"He was very moody through the meal. However, I was used to that. At the close of it he refused coffee, and said that, when I was quite through mine, he had something serious to say to me. It reminded me of the evening when he had announced his engagement to you. I couldn't think what it would be this time. If you and he had not been so palpably devoted to each other up to that very day, I should have suspected the announcement of a broken engagement. However, as you know, it was nothing of the sort. No—" She paused with a sort of vindictive recollection in her voice. "No. He began our serious discourse by asking me if I could raise twenty thousand dollars for him before noon the next day."

She paused. There had been a cold and calculated resentment in her tones.

"Yes?" breathed Gladys intently.

"I dare say that Harold has informed you of what my assets are?" Again the note of calculation.

"Never. We never spoke of such a thing."

"I did not know." Mrs. Lederlie spoke as one relieved. "He might have done so, naturally enough. If he did not speak to you of my scanty little resources, why, then, of course, you do not know that he might as well have asked me for the Koh-i-noor by noon of the next day as for twenty thousand dollars. I couldn't have raised two.

This house—and it is already mortgaged, Gladys—is almost the sum total of my possessions. I couldn't possibly have raised twenty thousand dollars."

She talked insistently, as though some one combated her.

"And he told you why he needed the money?" Gladys gently, coldly held her to the narrative.

"I asked him—one naturally would ask him. He replied that he had taken that sum in securities, deposited in the vaults, and had borrowed money for speculation on them. He had lost what he had speculated with—and the discovery of the loss of the bonds—the securities were bonds—was imminent, could not be averted another twenty-four hours. He wanted the money to redeem the bonds which he had—stolen, my dear! It is a horrid word enough, but people are more apt to shudder at the word than the deed. There is no use beating about the bush. He wanted money to buy back the bonds which he had stolen. Of course, I could not get it for him. The rest you know. He left the city that night, I suppose. At least, he told me that he intended to do so. And—here am I, as you see—"

"*Pardonnez moi, madame,*" said Rosalie, whisking in simultaneously with her rap on the dressing-room door, "but shall I pack madame's embroidered duck suit, also, for Ashville?"

"Yes—and shut the door after you," snapped madame. She turned to Gladys with something like a blush discernible on her face, even in the dim light of the room. "I am planning to run away as soon as I can, Gladys. I cannot bear it—the shame, the dishonor, the notoriety. Oh, he was selfish, selfish. Harold was! The first of my blood to bring disgrace upon me. How can I bear it?"

"Why had Harold been speculating?" asked the girl wearily, but as one determined to sift the matter to the end.

"Why? Why do any young men speculate? They want money. They want to marry. They want to give their wives motors and bijoux houses, and themselves wine cellars and—"

"Please!" begged the girl.

"My dear, I do not mean to be cruel.

I am only telling you the truth. He speculated for the same reasons that hundreds, thousands of young men speculate. He speculated, as thousands of young men do, on money that did not belong to him. The only difference was that he had the ill luck to be unfortunate in his speculations and to be caught in his thieving."

She spoke with incomprehensible bitterness and fierceness.

"And you," said Gladys. "What was it you said to him?"

"I said the wisest thing I knew how to say. I offered him enough money to get out of the country. I told him that probably, by and by, he could earn and save enough to make good his indiscretion; and that, when that time came, I thought I could command enough influence, for my own sake and his father's, to have any case against him dropped on the restitution of the money. And I begged him to spare me this last half hour. I begged him to make his own explanations to you!"

Long before the end of the tale, Gladys' hand had relinquished its hold upon the hand of her prospective mother-in-law. It lay, inert and limp, above the embroidered coverlid. She leaned back in her chair at this conclusion of the tale, lassitude in every line of her young figure. Her hand fell slowly to her lap; the other lay along the arm of the chair in which she sat, and a sunbeam, forcing its way beneath the drawn shades, struck flashes of green and rose from the great diamond on her finger—Harold's diamond, beautiful, large, flawless, with its specially made hand setting. Her eyes followed the flames of the gem. Suddenly, for the first time, they spelled money to her. She looked at them for a second, and then, with a sort of shudder, she slid the ring around, and buried the scintillating stone in the soft flesh of her palm. Her lover's mother watched her with a certain aloof curiosity.

"My dear," she said, after a moment's pause; "my dear, if this is a bitter day for you, please try to think what it must be for me. I am his mother."

"You are his mother," said the girl

slowly, with the effect of one searching for the right word; "you are his mother. And you gave him neither the aid which he asked nor the strength which he should have had. Oh, how could you? How could you?"

"I don't know what you mean, my dear. As I told you, I could no more have raised twenty thousand dollars than I could have flown across the sea. I could not possibly do it. I don't mean to say that I should have given it to him had I had it. What guarantee had I that the next temptation would not find him in exactly the same state of weakness? No. I think perhaps I should have had the strength of mind to make him drink the bitters of his own mixing, even had I been a wealthy woman. It is the only way to teach some people. But I might have weakened had I been able to get the money. I might have gotten it for him and let the future take care of itself. I have a natural weakness for an untarnished name, and I am a mother!"

"You did not get him the money," pursued Gladys relentlessly. "Oh, I am not questioning your truth! I dare say that you thought you couldn't get it. Though, if you had even telephoned me—but never mind. You not only decreed that he should be publicly disgraced, branded, here in the town where he had grown up; but even there you failed him. If he had done that wrong, and you were unwilling to take the material burden of it upon your own shoulders, if you were unwilling to do that, why didn't you make him play the man and not the coward? Why didn't you make him stay here and meet his punishment face to face? Why didn't you make him understand that even if you could not stand between him and that, you were here with him, loving him, hoping for him—oh, I don't know the words—agonizing with God for him? Why didn't you make him stay and bear what he had brought upon himself, and bear it with him?"

"And what part would you have played in these melodramatic proceedings—in this 'agonizing with God,' as you call it? Agonizing with Winter-

bury would be a more accurate description of the performance."

"I should have been here. I should have been by his side in whatever way he wanted me. I should have married him now, if he wanted that, or I should have waited for him until—until—until he was ready," she ended finally, her lips refusing to form the words she would fain have forced them to speak. "He should have known that I was here, helping him"—her eyes swam in tears, her voice shook—"believing in the real man, the true man, beneath the false seeming of this other."

"Heroics, Gladys, my dear, heroics! Forgivable enough in the circumstances, I dare say. But you must not rebuke me, as you have done, for not sharing your passion for a poetic martyrdom. I am fifty, not twenty-one, and, though you may be loath to believe it, I know a good deal of the world. Harold can work out his own redemption and the redemption of those bonds much better from a point outside the limits of our country than he could in the State's prison of this commonwealth. He will come back eventually with far more self-respect, with a much better chance at social rehabilitation, than he could possibly have in coming back from that punishment which you think it would be so manful for him to take. Believe me, my dear, I am wiser than you would have been in this matter. And now—"

"Tell me," demanded the girl, interrupting her dismissal, "did you give him one word of love, one assurance of loyalty? Or did he go off—away—without a single comfort in his poor heart?"

"Gladys, I am not a sentimental person at best; and I am least sentimental in such a crisis as my son introduced me into the night before last. He knows whether or not I care for him. I naturally said nothing on the subject at the time. You must go, my dear. Doctor Arthur will never forgive me for this defiance of his rules. And—Gladys, forgive me for suggesting it—I think you had better follow my example and leave town for the next few months. They'll be terrible for you."



"The only difference was that he had the ill luck to be unfortunate in his speculations and to be caught in his thieving."

"I think I may," replied Gladys quietly. "I think I may go after Harold and bring him back!"

"Do you want to ruin him?" cried his mother sharply.

"No," replied the girl. "I want to save him. I want to save his soul alive!"

CHAPTER VI.

The look of the old judge, which Lewis McDougal had fancied he detected upon the fair, animated, girlish face of Gladys Cartwright as she sat beneath her ancestor's portrait, was unmistakably there when she met her father after her interview with Mrs. Lederlie. It was no evanescent likeness, masked by the delicate rose and bright-

ness of youth. Gladys' color had ebbed from her face, the radiance was quenched in her eyes. All the lure, all the bloom of her charming girlhood, had disappeared. Grave and austere, yet with a sort of piteous quality in her very austerity, she sought her father late in the afternoon of the dreadful day; and something of the same fanaticism that had kindled the old man's eyes more than two centuries before burned now in hers.

"Father, shall I disturb you if I come in now? There is a great deal I want to say to you."

Doctor Cartwright looked up from his book of colored plates nervously. He had been dreading this moment so keenly that he had not read a line for

an hour. It took only one glance at his daughter to tell him that she knew the truth—that her heroic disbelief of the forenoon was a thing of the past.

"Certainly, my dear, certainly. Come in. I have been hoping to see you. I see"—he looked at her appealingly—"I see that you—that you—that your point of view——"

"You see that I know now you were right in what you said this morning," said Gladys, helping him out. "I went to see Harold's mother. It is as you said. He took the money. He has gone away."

"My poor girl!" said the doctor.

"You must not pity me too much," she returned steadily. "I am not the one to be most pitied."

"You mean his mother? Ah, yes, she is more to be pitied than you—more to be pitied than any one. Her connection with him is irrevocable. Yours, thank God, was only temporary. She is knit to him in a thousand intimate ways—he is of her blood. While you—you are young, my dear. And however much you may have thought you cared for him, this discovery of his unworthiness, of his dastardly, contemptible unworthiness will help to cure you of your infatuation. It may be difficult for you to realize it now, but time will cure you completely."

Gladys heard him out without interruption. The expression on her face did not change. She was still the descendant of the fanatical old judge who had tried and condemned his own son. She was a fanatic, too, but with the new fanaticism of her time. The disquiet in her father's heart grew as he watched her, sitting there silent before him.

"It will be best for you to leave the city for a while," he said hurriedly. "I have been needing a trip abroad myself. I think I can turn things over to Gillespie——"

"Father, dear," she interrupted, "I'm not going to run away. I'm going to face the thing out. I will leave the running away"—her lips curled a little scornfully—"to his mother. I mean to stay here."

"Well, Gladys, of course you can do

whatever seems to you best. Your own instincts must be your surest guide. I only thought that for a while, to escape the notoriety, a change of scene——" The doctor fell into incoherency.

"You have just said that my own instincts must be my surest guide," the girl broke in, a little eagerly. "I am glad that you feel that way, father. I think that they are my surest guide, too. And they and my conscience both counsel the one course. I want to find Harold."

"What!" The doctor bounced from his chair in the energy of his amazement and disapproval. "What! Are you crazy, Gladys?"

"No, I don't think that I am," she replied evenly. "I cannot see anything else to do. He has done something wrong—something dreadful. There can be no peace for him, no growth of his mind or his soul, while he tries to flee the consequences of his act. He must come back, father, and expiate it."

"I think you would have some difficulty in persuading the young man himself to do anything of the sort," answered the doctor sharply.

"I don't think so. But, even if it were difficult to persuade him, that would make no difference. The thing would be to persuade him whether it were difficult or easy. Oh, father, people cannot run away from the consequences of their deeds."

"Are you serious? Do you expect to persuade that young man to come back home and go meekly to jail?"

Gladys' color changed. Her bright, fixed eyes wavered.

"Not quite that," she said. "There are other consequences involved besides going to jail. There is the loss of belief, the loss of respect, the loss of opportunity. I want him to come back here and to face those things; to make himself again worthy of belief, worthy of respect, worthy of opportunity. As for the money part—again her color changed and her eyes wavered—"as for the money part, father, I want to pay it."

This time Doctor Cartwright's feelings could not gain even the relief of

an ejaculation. He stared at her blankly.

"It isn't so very much," faltered Gladys.

"Isn't it, indeed?" Doctor Cartwright's voice returned to him in a flow of irony. "It is scarcely a large enough sum to induce a man to have thrown up everything—his position, his honor, the respect of his fellow beings, the love of a dear, believing woman, the hope of a home—it's a very small sum, indeed, if you weigh it against these things! But, commercially speaking, the theft of twenty thousand dollars is not a mere peccadillo."

"I know, I know. I only meant that it was not—not more money than might be raised."

"Whom were you thinking of asking to contribute to such a fund?" inquired the doctor satirically. "The depositors at the bank, the directors—or whom?"

"I thought that perhaps you and I might make up the sum," the girl answered. "Oh, father, don't you understand? Don't you understand that I even feel—responsible? He—he cared for me. I don't care what you think about this that he has done—I know he loves me. I know he loves me! And, loving me, I should have had more influence. I should have made it impossible for him to do this. I should have meant so much to him that he could not do any wrong. Don't you see?"

"I see nothing of the sort. A woman's reasoning when she is infatuated with a scoundrel is always strange, but yours passes all the bounds."

"I am sorry," said Gladys obstinately. "I am sorry I cannot make you see it as I do. For I do see myself as partly to blame in the past—and as the whole of his hope for the future. I am going to pay the bank the money he took from it."

Doctor Cartwright looked at his daughter in bewildered anger. Her point of view seemed to him preposterous.

"We will not talk any more about this to-night," he told Gladys, with parental dignity. "I make allowances

for your overstrained nervous condition. But the idea is outrageous—perfectly outrageous! I shall not countenance it for a moment, much as I want to give you comfort, much as I love you, my dear."

"We can defer the matter until the morning, if you wish it," acceded Gladys. "But it is you who must change during the night, father, not I. I should be wretched—I should almost die—if I did not do everything I could to save him."

She rose and left the study, going up to her own room. A thousand tender memories of the handsome lad who had won her girl's heart crowded upon her. She thought of him as he was now, fleeing, frightened, dishonored, homeless. Pity, almost unendurable in its intensity, swelled within her. She must save him, and to save him she must find him. She must bring him back, and let him work out his salvation here where his damnation had been wrought. It would be hard for him, but she would be with him to comfort and sustain him. To think that no one would help her in the holy task before her! The boy's mother, idle, inefficient, selfish, was hurrying away. Her father, gentle dreamer though he seemed, had steeled his heart against her desires. All alone she must work out her problem, all alone accomplish her undertaking.

Yet—not quite alone. She remembered the kind, strong face of the man who, only that morning, had promised her his coöperation. She felt sure that she could depend on him—the man whom she had not known the week before.

CHAPTER VII.

Lewis was not altogether astonished when his mail, two or three days later, contained a note from Miss Cartwright asking him to come and see her, and telling him plainly that she was going to call upon him for the service he had so kindly proffered on the morning when they had met in the street. He felt a youthful glow of elation, of which he was immediately ashamed. A

fine spirit that was, he told himself, in which to go to the help of a broken-hearted woman—the spirit of a conceited boy rejoicing over a favor from a sweetheart! Yet he could not banish the warmth from his heart.

She received him in the old-fashioned, lovely drawing-room, but he had no eyes for its well-preserved dignity and charm, although usually he grasped these things with the quickness of the man to whom they are novelties. He saw only the girl herself, more indomitably proud now than when he had first seen her dispensing smiles and greetings, and happily waiting for her acknowledged lover. Proud—but with an unworldly pride, the pride of an unchangeable spirit, of a lofty, unbreakable resolution. All the Spartan in Lewis McDougal, whose early life had been largely a grim struggle, saluted her as a fellow spirit.

It was a brief tale she had to tell him. She repeated her conversation with her father, and felt no misgivings lest he, too, would fail to understand her position. If there was any lack of comprehension in him, it did not appear. Gravely, respectfully he listened. The noble vagaries of young minds were not to him laughable or contemptible.

"The practical part of the difficulty," said Gladys, "the part which is my reason for trespassing upon your goodness, is this. I have, in my own right, enough money to pay the bank. But I am very ignorant of business. I am of age, and the money is mine—left to me by my mother. My father knows how I mean to use it, but he refuses to aid me. I do not wish to call upon his lawyers and his men of business; it would put them in a sort of awkward position. So I thought that, perhaps, you would help me with that, and would conduct the negotiations with the bank. As for all the rest—trying to find Harold, I mean—I don't see quite how I am going to manage. Indeed—" She hesitated for a moment, and the impassivity of her features broke into a sort of confusion. "Indeed, I do not see quite how I am going to manage, even for myself."

"You mean?" said Lewis when the pause had become embarrassing.

"I mean," she said, with the air of one resolutely shaking off an unworthy timidity or confusion, "that my father says he will discontinue my allowance if I do this thing which is so distasteful to him. Don't misunderstand—" She flushed with earnestness and eagerness. "Don't think my father harsh or unfeeling. It is only because he feels that what I am doing is unwise that he takes the stand he does. He could not be true to his own conscience if he did not."

"I understand," said Lewis gravely.

"So that, perhaps—perhaps I shall have to make some money for myself. Not, of course"—reddening, she hastened to free her father from too harsh, too gross a suspicion—"not, of course, my actual living. My dear father does not threaten to turn me out of doors because we happen to differ so vitally—but money to make my search. Do you think—" She looked at him appealingly, and Lewis foresaw that he was going to think exactly what she wanted him to. "Do you think that I could possibly make some money by teaching? I have been very expensively, if not very well, educated—" She smiled, and, in that first glimpse to-day of the smiling girl whom he had met last week, Lewis decided that she was even lovelier when lit by a passing gayety than when she was grave. "And it seems as though I might be able to do something of that sort."

"I should say there would be no trouble at all in getting you a number of pupils in—er—in what did you specialize, Miss Cartwright?"

"Modern languages. I speak French and German very well. I had French and German governesses, and spent my summers abroad when I was quite a little child."

A sense of the distance between them flooded the young professor. French and German governesses—summers abroad! The way to achievement made easy from the very beginning! And he saw himself again a boy, driving the cows home in the evening; he saw the

bare, lamplighted kitchen in which he sat for study. Yet, he told himself, they were somehow akin, he and this delicately nurtured girl. Across the generations there had sprung to her the stern, strong spirit of some rugged ancestor brought up in hard conditions; and he, Lewis, was in his own person that ancestor for his race.

And to think that such courage as hers, such grave gallantry of mind and heart, should be wasted upon that unworthy boy! Yet perhaps there was wisdom in her seeming folly. Perhaps what seemed so prodigal a course—this splendid spending of herself to rescue that weak soul—would indeed accomplish its purpose.

Before he left her, he was pledged to all her wishes. He was to act as intermediary, first between her and her father's man of business, then between her and the bank officials, and after that between her and possible pupils. He himself was rather in demand as a lecturer at girls' schools in the vicinity. He felt assured that he could obtain classes for her. He had a vague impression that he had promised to devote his summers and all his holidays to the search for the fugitive young man.

Once or twice as he walked along the quiet, autumnal streets, he stopped short to shake himself, and to say, after the manner of the old woman in the nursery rhyme: "This surely can't be I." It was so long since he had felt such a glow of enthusiasm.

Fortunately he knew that he was not falling in love. It would have embarrassed and discommoded him had he had a moment's slightest doubt on that subject. But he had an infallible sign by which to mark the coming on of love. That was a selfish passion, seeking its own gratification. Obviously the feeling that inspired him to help Gladys Cartwright prosecute a search for her missing lover was not akin to that sentiment.

CHAPTER VIII.

To obtain Gladys' holdings, armed as he was with her authority, was not a difficult matter. But the affair of the

bank proved less easy to arrange, and for an unexpected reason. Ryan, the chief figure of the directorate—big, bluff, and burly—showed an unexpected hesitation about accepting the money.

"Haven't you noticed," he asked Lewis, "that we are not saying anything more about the matter? The papers dropped it after the fourth day. Didn't you notice? We've called off the detectives. We've paid up, and we're able to stand the loss. As far as we are concerned there'll be no prosecution. So—so what's the use of Miss Cartwright's spending her money this way? Very decent of her, and all that sort of thing. She must be mighty fond of the boy to be willing to hand out a cool twenty thousand for him—" Lewis winced. "But why should she, since it ain't necessary?"

Mr. McDougal managed tactfully to convey to Mr. Ryan his impression that this was rather an unusual course for the bank to take under the circumstances. But Mr. Ryan, jocosely asserting that financiers were not as flinty as they seemed, bowed him from the door of the private office with Gladys' twenty thousand dollars still intact. Lewis felt vaguely disappointed. If it were unnecessary for her to apply her money to the payment of Harold's theft, perhaps it would be unnecessary for her to teach; perhaps all the little service that he, Lewis McDougal, had promised himself to render her would be unnecessary.

When he went to the Cartwright house to tell the girl the failure of his mission, she met him with an air of excitement. Her cheeks were dyed carmine with it, her eyes were brilliant. Before he could tell her anything, she burst forth:

"Oh, I'm so glad you've come! I've had a letter—such a letter!"

"From him?" interrupted Lewis, his heart dropping.

"From him?" she repeated, apparently not understanding, in the rush of her own ideas. Then she understood, and the color ebbed from her cheeks, the brilliancy of excitement died out of her eyes. "Oh, no. Not from—not from

Harold. From his mother. Here!" She pulled it from her belt and handed it to him. "Read it. It is all too dreadful. It makes the wrong more wrong yet."

He read the letter from Julie Lederlie. It was a characteristic document from the crest at the top of the heavy linen sheet to the scrawled signature at the bottom. It breathed a curious mixture of self-satisfaction and humility—the humility being, as it were, addressed only to Gladys' conception of her, the self-satisfaction being innate. In the letter, Mrs. Lederlie announced that the bank had kindly promised not to prosecute Harold; and she gave Gladys to understand that the reason for its clemency was her promise to marry Ryan in the immediate future.

He has been, as you probably know—every one who knew us both was aware of the fact—a very persistent suitor for a good many years. Until this dreadful thing happened he was a hopeless suitor. Of course, I need use no disguise with you. You know us both. I do not pretend to be self-made, and that is all that can be said of him in extenuation of his peculiarities. However, I am ready to make any sacrifice for Harold's sake. Mr. Ryan can, of course, provide for me handsomely, and he is most generous in all his propositions. If you hear from Harold—and I cannot believe that he will treat you in the same unfeeling manner he does me, and leave you to eat your heart out with fear and anxiety—if you hear from Harold, do let him know that everything is in a fair way toward a satisfactory arrangement. I should strongly advise his going abroad for a while. If you ever could bring yourself to forgive my poor boy and to marry him, there are ever so many lovely little places in



"He was of so prepossessing a type that I stared at him in a rather unmannerly fashion for a while."

Europe where the living is cheap and the society agreeable.

"So the handsome Mrs. Lederlie is going to marry the self-made Ryan," observed Lewis when he had finished the letter and handed it back to Gladys. "And so Ryan is going to foot the loss himself. Well, of course, every man knows what he wants in a wife by the time he's sixty, and I judge that to be about Ryan's age. What do you think of it?"

"I think it is abominable!" cried the girl passionately. "Why does she need to make things more terrible than they are by selling herself to that dreadful man, whom she detests? And you see her whole idea is to keep Harold out of the way—to let him know that he is safe, but to keep him out of the way. She cares nothing at all what becomes of his energy, what becomes of his

mind, his heart, his soul. She can exile him to a pleasant European country where the living is cheap and the society agreeable! That would be to complete his ruin. I tell you," she cried passionately, "I believe that it is only by expiation he stands the slightest chance of redeeming himself. Not the mere money, but the shame, the ignominy. He has got to face them. He has got to bear them. And he could, oh, I know he could, if he knew that I would face them and bear them with him."

"We'll find him, and make him understand all that," said Lewis reassuringly. "And meantime I wouldn't take Mrs. Lederlie too seriously on the subject of her sacrifice. I dare say she wouldn't have Ryan if she didn't want him. Probably she was all ready to accept him, anyway. Don't worry too much about her selling herself. And now may I suggest to you that you'd better put your bonnet on and carry these securities down to the safety-deposit vaults?"

"You've been too kind. I don't know why I should put all this upon you," said Gladys, with sudden compunction.

"You wanted to make me your grateful and adoring friend for life," said Lewis. "You know it's the people for whom we are allowed to do things to whom we are really grateful—not the people who do things for us. Besides, I really have done nothing."

"You've helped me to live through these days," said the girl. "It may not seem much to you, but one has such an exaggerated feeling about the importance of one's own life."

"With all this wealth back in your possession," said Lewis, trying to mask a real anxiety under an air of lightness, "I suppose you won't care to go on with your teaching projects?"

"Oh, but I will!" cried she. "I should go mad if I simply sat, and thought and thought and remembered—or if I even tried to do the same familiar round of things that I've always done. Whatever happens, I must do the teaching—if I can get it to do—until—until there is some clew to follow to him."

CHAPTER IX.

As the Fates decided, Mrs. Lederlie did not buy the immunity of her son by the projected sale of her charming and well-preserved person, her eminent ancestry, and her social gifts. Two days after Gladys had received her letter, the tender mother started North to meet her prospective husband in Washington. It had been agreed that, in view of all the painful circumstances, the marriage should be more or less private, and should take place in that city, where Mr. Ryan had certain interests supposed to be not unconnected with influencing certain congressmen on sundry points of railway legislation.

In what gala mood of pride, or in what mourning mood of humiliation, Mrs. Lederlie set out for the rendezvous and her new nuptials, no one ever knew. The train on which she came North collided with a freight train on the bank of a river. There followed one of the country's historic calamities of wreckage and conflagration. Many of the passengers were killed; many of those who escaped with their lives would have fared better had they been killed. Of these latter, Mrs. Lederlie was one.

When Ryan, apprized of the disaster only by the daily papers—for there was nothing upon her person to give the rescuers any hint as to those with whom they should communicate—rushed down to the little Southern village near which the accident had occurred, he found in the hospital a poor, mutilated being, whose eyes were scarcely discernible beneath many bandages, and whose twisted lips could scarcely enunciate his name. He was horribly shocked and somewhat grieved. He also had a sense of having barely escaped a great misfortune—to his mind the greatest in the world, a bad bargain.

"Suppose," he said to himself, shuddering as he came out of the hospital, with its suffocating smell of anesthetics, "suppose it had happened after we were married. Gad! What an escape!"

He took the next train back to Washington, and through his secretary he arranged that flowers should be expressed

to the stricken lady every day, and that a telegram should be sent each morning. He went about, sobered and depressed, for two or three hours, occasionally mopping his forehead when he found it suddenly bedewed with a cold sweat of horror at the thought that this accident might have happened after he had married Julie Lederlie. And then, recalling his duty to his depositors, he called up Professor McDougal on the long-distance telephone, and informed him that, recent negotiations having fallen through, the bank would be very glad to accept Miss Cartwright's twenty thousand dollars in payment of the sum stolen by Mr. Lederlie, and that all those forms of secrecy which the professor had wished to observe would be observed in the transaction.

Lewis understood the situation well enough, and, as he hung up the receiver, an attentive listener might have caught the words "cur—brutal cur," upon the air.

He looked at his watch. It was an hour providentially free from lectures. He could go at once to Gladys and tell of the new aspect of affairs. He found himself picturing her the victim of an accident such as Mrs. Lederlie's; and, while his fancy recoiled in horror and terror from the thought, yet his heart dwelt upon it yearningly. How a man would cherish her, though stripped of all her beauty—cherish her for the wonderful soul that nothing, not accident or anguish or age, could ever dim!

As he reached this conclusion, Professor McDougal stopped short in his walk and looked startled. Then he reminded himself of his infallible rule for detecting the first symptoms of the condition known as falling in love. The selfish wish for possession, the demand for a return of affection—that was it! He was relieved to remember it. For a moment he had been alarmed by the intensity of his imagination in regard to a Gladys stripped of all the externals which made her so desirable to the ordinary man. But since there was no selfishness in the thought, no craving that she should think of him with a like intensity, he was safe. He was not in

love with her; he was not beginning to be in love with her! And that was most fortunate, all things considered.

CHAPTER X.

There is a secret of life which only the mature know; and they not always, though they have marked its working a thousand times. It is the inevitability with which all nature, animate and inanimate, hastens to struggle toward the concealment or the cure of the ravages wrought by disaster.

And so it is in human affairs. At the time of the upheaval, the cataclysm, the great, disastrous loss or catastrophe, it seems to the overwhelmed mortal that he is forever to live in turmoil or in anguish; that this grief which plows his soul, this horror which his mind can scarcely support, is to be his daily portion for the rest of his life.

But he comes home from the funeral of his dearest, and, behold, the house is in its old order, the closed windows are open again, the cheerful lights lit; he walks in the old ways; he readjusts himself. He may be as stricken as the man who has lost an arm; but, like the cripple, he learns that his task is to live in a world of whole people as though he were one of them. Life insists upon being taken on the basis of its calms, not that of its tornadoes.

So Gladys found it in the next five years. She readjusted herself to a new, crippled life, which outwardly was not so very unlike the old one from which she knew it to be abysmally separated. At first, every ring at the doorbell, every approach of the postman, every sight of a whistling telegraph messenger strolling along the street, made her heart stop beating and all her senses pause in one great act of listening. She was like a woman in a devastating storm in the hill country, who watches the jagged lightning play all about the horizon, and who, panic-stricken, lives only from flash to flash.

But by and by this state passed. She had her new interests, and they were exacting. She had her new friend, and the thought of him was sometimes to

her like the thought of religion to a storm-affrighted woman. And gradually she had some of the old duties, the old pleasures, to take up again. Harold's mother, stripped of beauty and of health, crept back to her home, and she was Gladys' constant charge. Her own father, aging rapidly, always puzzled by her attitude toward her problem, never reconciled to it, required daily more and more of her care, until the day came when he needed it no more at all, and she was left alone in the big, old-fashioned house under the elms.

When Doctor Cartwright's will was made known, there was a revival of the old tale which five years, with their newer scandals and romances, had half buried; for Doctor Cartwright left his property to Gladys only in trust, until such time as she should marry. Then, if she married Harold Lederlie, the fortune was to be dissipated among various charities. If she married another than Harold Lederlie, it was to come unreservedly to her. So, to the last, Doctor Cartwright safeguarded what he believed to be his daughter's interests.

Gladys heard the will without much emotion. It was not a great surprise to her, and certainly not a great disappointment. She loved her old home and the things which made it beautiful; but for stocks and bonds she had no very keen feeling. She knew that she could earn her own living now, and money as merely money meant little to her. If her long waiting, her long search for Harold should be rewarded at last, she was sure that he would regard the loss of fortune as a trifling matter, even as she did.

The years had not passed without her searching for him. The purpose which she had passionately declared, of finding and of redeeming him, had never consciously wavered. She no more thought of violating that pledge which she had made to herself than a dedicated nun would think of any other form of existence than that to which she was vowed. Some day Harold would return. When that time came he should find her ready, waiting to help him win back to honor.

In the darkened sick room in which Julie Lederlie spent her days, complaining of her hard fate, reviling Ryan, bemoaning her son's callousness, there sometimes came gossip which Gladys, for all that she walked abroad, did not hear elsewhere. It was in that chamber that she heard the first rumor of Lewis McDougal's engagement.

"It's eminently suitable," declared Julie Lederlie, with some of her old vivacity. "Of course, she would have been a nobody but for her first marriage and Elder's fortune. But, then, Mr. McDougal himself is scarcely a Vere de Vere. She's not young, but neither is he. It's queer he hasn't told you of it. You are great friends, I hear."

"Did Mrs. Elder tell you herself?" asked Gladys. Her voice sounded far away, even to her own ears.

"Nancy Elder? No. She's the most secretive thing on the footstool. But I heard it from her cousin. It began when they met at the Isthmus. She was there with a government party—she's always been in with the Washington set. What was he doing there—the McDougal man?"

The McDougal man had been there on her ceaseless mission, Gladys knew—had been there because of the clew furnished her by a detective agency, to the effect that Harold had been recognized among the young employees of the government on the canal. Lewis had wasted—she had always thought of it as wasted hitherto!—a mid-year holiday in proving the information false. Perhaps he had not found it so profitless a period!

She walked home very pensively that afternoon. She felt hurt and humiliated; she had opened her heart to him so unreservedly. She had taken him into the inmost recesses of her life. A brother could not have been more intimate with her hopes, her plans, her dreams. And he would not share this one little thing with her! She told herself that it was his lack of confidence in her which stung her so intolerably. She was so wounded that she could not bear to see him when next he came to the house. She ran away to New York for

a visit to escape the meeting with him. It was the first time in five years that she had gone an hour's journey from her home without consulting with him about it.

When she returned, not by any means cured of her wound, he came to see her at once. His face was gray and lined, as though he had not slept.

"Where have you been?" he asked roughly. "Why did you go away without letting me know? Was it—was it—have you heard from him? Found him?"

"No!" cried the girl.

She struggled with a strange embarrassment. How could she tell him that she had gone away because she could not bear his lack of confidence in her?

At her "no," color returned to his face, the deep-cut lines of anxiety faded, his heavy eyes brightened.

"I—I—felt resentful, I suppose, that you did not tell me," he explained lamely. "I could not think of anything less important than—that that which would take you away so hurriedly."

His speech gave her an opening.

"Have you not kept anything from me?" she asked; and now he noticed that her face, too, was ravaged by some secret pain.

"I? No. Never. What made you think such a thing?"

She blushed. She, who had spoken so openly to him on every subject under the sun during all these years, felt a curious reluctance to mention his own affairs to him. But she struggled against the feeling as one unworthy of their candid friendship.

"I had heard," she said, "that something very happy had befallen you. It hurt me that you would not share your happiness with me after the way in which you have shared all my wretchedness."

"Happiness? I don't know what it is," he answered. "And surely if I had anything, happy or unhappy, in my life, I should open my heart to you about it."

Her face cleared as magically as his had done when she had said that it was no errand connected with young Leder-

lie which had taken her away from home.

"I am so glad," she said. "It hurt me so to think that you should keep such a secret from me—who would have rejoiced so in your happiness."

"And what," he asked thickly, "did my supposititious happiness consist in?"

She looked at him. His dark eyes seemed to be burning upon hers across a gulf. She felt blinded, dizzy, breathless. She could not support the intensity of his look; she could not speak.

"What was it made this happiness of mine I would not share with you?" he persisted.

She took her courage desperately in hand.

"That you were engaged to Mrs. Elder," she said.

She forced her eyes to meet his steadily, her voice to be even, controlled, her palpitating heart to beat steadily.

"Ah!" he cried. "And you thought that that would be happiness for me?"

"She is very charming," replied Gladys, with a conventional air.

The strange, unforeseen moment of tremulous emotion had passed. She had herself in hand now. Her calmness communicated itself to him.

"Whenever I have anything of that sort to tell you, Gladys, my dear friend," he said, "you may be sure that I shall tell you myself. But I hardly expect ever to have anything of that sort to tell you."

And then, as though to punish himself for some fault not declared, he began to talk of Harold and of the possibilities of finding him with a fervor he had not shown for many months. Gladys did not meet him fully.

"Have you ever thought," she broke in upon him, "that he may be—dead?"

"Yes, I have thought of that possibility. And I have sometimes thought of another possibility. I have thought that he might be—married."

"It is not because I am vain or conceited that I know that cannot be so," answered the girl. "But because I—I think I know him, in spite of the incomprehensible thing that he did. I think I know him, and if I do— You don't



Lewis watched him with grim-set jaws and clenched hands.

know how much I meant to him," she ended.

"I can imagine something of it," he retorted savagely.

"Besides, don't you see that it would be too ironic if it were not as I say? It would be too ironic if you and I were wasting all this time, and money, and energy, and devotion—all for a grim joke at the end. Wouldn't it?"

"I am sometimes of the opinion," replied Mr. McDougal unexpectedly, "that my life would show a greater irony than that if closely examined. And I have no particular reason for believing that the universe is run on an unironic principle."

She felt the overwhelming wave of confusion and faintness again as he met his eyes. And then they plunged into a long discussion of the waste places of the earth where Harold might be in hiding. With a guilty fervor, they

promised themselves and each other to redouble their efforts to find him.

Yet, as he walked home that evening, Mr. McDougal was not satisfied with himself. He thought he detected a little selfishness in his feeling for Miss Cartwright, and it alarmed him. And he rebuked himself for the wave of happiness that engulfed him at the recollection of her eyes drooping before his.

"Perhaps he will never come to light!" he cried in his heart. "And I can always go on being her friend and slave. That is all I want. Oh, the pity of it, the cruel waste of it all!"

CHAPTER XI.

Gladys' first emotion when she received Lewis' letter was of complete and overwhelming thankfulness. The task of years was finished—Harold was found!

Then she remembered—the task of the years was about to begin; for what had she sought him but to live with him, to give him the strength that his weakness needed, to develop and perfect the good in his nature? It was in the tender vanity of love and pity that she had set herself to the work, never questioning her fitness to be a salvation to her lover.

But the first fervor of that consecration had passed; across the vision of the future sometimes now there crept the ugly, disloyal thought: "But what of me, always doomed to be the leader of faltering footsteps? What of me, who can never be sure again, this side of heaven, that he is all I once thought him, all I would have him to be?"

She tried to forgive herself the thought. She attributed it to weariness with the long search, to the inevitable, hardening influence of the years. She declared that in the depths, the untouched springs of her nature, she was still the girl who had walked with him to the wharf that misty November night long ago, and had promised there to defy the menaces and the wrongs of the world with him and for him.

And now—here was the letter of her faithful friend.

COPPER CITY, N. M., June 12, 1909.

MY DEAR GLADYS: At last, I think, it is safe to say that your long search is over. And, after all our well-organized efforts, it seems to have been blind chance which solved the problem for us. I had business in the local bank here yesterday morning, and at the teller's window, just before me in the line of depositors, was a tall, good-looking, bronzed fellow who seemed curiously familiar. I knew that I had not met him since my arrival. He was of so prepossessing a type that I stared at him in a rather unmannerly fashion for a while. Suddenly I realized the reason for my recognition—it was the portrait of young Lederlie which I had seen so many times upon your desk in Winterbury.

For the second I half expected him to know me also, forgetting that he had probably never laid eyes on me, his one opportunity of doing so would have been at that memorable tea—I have always regarded that tea as a turning point in my life—and on that occasion I remember that he had eyes for no one but you. A beard, a deep coat of tan, the fine lines which the bright sunshine and the dry winds of this region gave on people's faces, age, and experience, have all

helped to change him; but they do not make him unrecognizable.

After he had gone out of the bank, and I had seen him mount a broncho tied to a post in front of the building, I made some inquiries about him. They confirmed me in my belief that he was indeed Lederlie. He came to Copper City in the spring following his disappearance from Winterbury. He was, like many of those who drift into this last post in the wilderness, "up against it," but his manner and his gifts made friends for him.

He went by the name of Henry Lamb—does so still. I suppose he selected a pseudonym with initials which would correspond to those he might have on his belongings. But it was his first recorded occupation that persuades me that he is your—I find it difficult to write the words, my dear Gladys—your promised husband.

An epidemic of smallpox swept through the town and caught two of the minor bank officers; Lederlie—or rather Lamb—applied for one of their jobs, obtained it, showed familiarity with the work, and made good in the position. He might have been advanced to one of some trust had he not declined it; in Copper City they don't inquire too closely into a man's antecedents, but allow him to make his history and his reputation from the time of his appearance.

Lamb, it seems, developed a saving streak, and began to invest his hoardings modestly in sheep. He took up a claim somewhere off in the hills beyond this place, added to his stock, and has become a ranchman of considerable importance. His place is a day's ride from here.

I am here to do whatever you wish in the matter. My own preference would be not to see him until you also see him, but if you desire it I will go out and tell him all that you have done for him, and the incomparably greater all that you mean to do for him. The information, however, would probably come more gratefully to him from your lips than from any other human being's—especially from any other man's.

Everything that I have heard of him is to his credit. Of that I am profoundly glad. However much I have sympathized with your point of view, however I have admired, revered you for your loyalty, your divine power of forgiveness, I do not think I could have borne it to see you link your life with that of a man who had crimes and weaknesses before as well as behind him. But Lamb does not seem to be that sort.

Let me know, my dear friend, what to do. I am, as I have always been,

Yours to command,
LEWIS McDOUGAL.

She read it over and over, that letter. Excitement starred her eyes with some of the luster of their earlier, gladder years. She blessed the chance that had

taken Lewis to this remote corner of the country, not hunting Harold as he had so often done, but accidentally, casually. Why, he had debated in the spring whether the investigation he wished to make of the vanishing tribes of the West might not have been conducted better in Texas than in New Mexico. By such a narrow margin had their luck turned, their desire been fulfilled. He had been gone since April now. She would be glad to see him again—she had missed him. She always missed him when he went on his excursions from Winterbury.

She had made up her mind, even as she read his letter, to go out there to Copper City, and take the day's ride out to Harold's ranch. He had always had a boy's love for the open life—Harold. She had always known deep in her heart that it was for such a life that he was best fitted, and that it would bring out all that was best in him. Well, he had found it, and it had, she hoped, she believed, regenerated him.

When all was done that needed doing—when he had come back here to face the world he had slunk away from, when he had restored the money that he must never know she had paid—when all was over, and their lives were to be indissolubly joined, would he want her to live out there in that land of blinding sunshine and bare ranges?

She looked out through the windows at the dear, familiar street. The first freshness of the grass was still dewy on the long, well-kept lawns; piazzas rioted with color and perfume; the houses, deep-set in their greenery, told of generations that had preceded hers, of generations that would follow. It was the place she loved, the life she loved. For her, little excursions into the wilderness—yes; little sallies into adventure; but always the home-coming to this land of order, of things long established. She sighed.

There was a telephone on the stand beside her bed. It rang now, and Mrs. Lederlie's fretful voice summoned her. She was not so well to-day—it was strange the doctors could do nothing for her. She surely paid them enough. She

was wretched, she was lonely; there was no one near her who cared for her. Sometimes she suspected them all of being in a league to kill her—and perhaps it would be the kindest thing that could be done to her. But meantime would Gladys come to her?

Sighing again, Gladys said that she would come. This burden of the disabled, peevish woman was the heaviest of all that she had to bear.

The room was as carefully arranged to be the court of a French fine lady of the old school as it had been before the accident had despoiled Mrs. Lederlie of health and of her cherished beauty. Rose-colored hangings, embroidered linens, fresh flowers, surrounded her. The figure that pain had wasted was clothed as exquisitely as ever. The hair that had grown so scant and white was crowned by rare lace and delicate-hued ribbon. And all the frivolous perfection of her appurtenances only made the shrunken form, the fretful face, more pitiable.

Gladys stooped and kissed the withered cheek. It seemed to her that Mrs. Lederlie looked perceptibly more ill than when she had last seen her, two days before. She tried to get some report from the trained nurse, but Mrs. Lederlie protested crabbedly.

"Don't stay there whispering with Miss Day, Gladys," she commanded crossly. "I know I'm worse, she knows I'm worse, and you can see it for yourself! Why should I have to suffer like this? But it will soon be over. If Miss Day knows how soon, let her tell me and not you. I'm the more interested in the matter yet."

Miss Day favored Gladys with a despairing glance, and left the room. She would be able to get an hour off while Gladys sat with the invalid and listened to her complaints.

"Dear Mrs. Lederlie," said the girl, bringing a chair close to the *chaise longue* on which the invalid was propped for the day, "I have had some news this morning which I hope will make you glad."

"News? There certainly wasn't any in the papers!"

"No—this wasn't in the papers. It was in a letter from Mr. McDougal."

"That long professor person? Yes? What did he want—besides you? He's wanted you plainly enough ever since Harold left home—even a bedridden old woman could see that!"

Gladys grew scarlet.

"How—how can you? How dare you say such a thing to me?" she stammered. Anger and a curious alarm, a curious faintness, fought for possession of her faculties. "He—he knows to what I have dedicated all my life. He respects it. He—he is incapable of—what you suggest."

"The more fool he!" commented the elder lady tersely. "But don't mount your high horse, and go careering through the clouds. What's your news? But first will you go to the cabinet on the wall in Miss Day's room, and bring me my pellets? Here's the key. You might think that a woman who is paid twenty-five dollars a week to wait upon me would arrange things within reach of my hand when she leaves me alone. And you would think that she wouldn't leave me alone very much. But you would reason without your Miss Day in that case. Yes, those pellets in the brown bottle."

Gladys brought the bottle. The shriveled hand that had been so fair and firm only a few short years before clutched at it eagerly. Gladys wondered if she should have given the pills, if perhaps Miss Day did not keep them out of reach for reasons of her own. But it was too late to draw back now. Mrs. Lederlie was swallowing water upon the dry dose with a feverish impatience.

"They quiet me—they're the only things that help me," she explained. "Now for your news."

As gently as she could, she told Mrs. Lederlie the story in Lewis' letter of that morning. With strained eyes and increasing pallor the older woman listened.

"Alive—and he has never let me know! Alive—and I a wreck here, and he has not cared or——"

"Dearest Mrs. Lederlie, consider a minute! He doesn't know that—the

search for him has been abandoned so long. He thinks himself still the prey of every detective, of every officer. How could he risk communicating with either of us? If they were still searching for him, to bring him to justice, we—you and I, his mother and the woman he was going to marry—would be the very sources through which they would expect to trap him."

"When I was a young woman," wondered Mrs. Lederlie, "many men risked great things for me. You have never known what it is to be a beauty, a toast, a belle, my poor Gladys, have you?"

The girl reddened with shame and pity for the wreck of vanity who sat before her, incapable even of holding to one thread of discourse any longer.

"Not but you were, and are, a very pretty girl."

Mrs. Lederlie regained her faculties, which had seemed in danger of dissipating in drowsiness. Gladys felt sure now that she should not have given her the pellets.

"Never mind about my looks, dear," she said gently. "Haven't you anything to say about what I told you? I am going out there. If everything turns out as I hope, I shall be bringing him in to see you before two months are past."

"I don't want to see him. He would only look at me again as he looked that night when I told him I couldn't save him. And I don't want you to go away, leaving me entirely at the mercy of these people, who want to kill me. I believe that Day woman is in Ryan's pay now. He fears that I might hold him to his promise—fears it, mind you! And he, the great, coarse creature, was after me for years before I promised to marry him. But now——" She dropped into a doze. By and by she awakened, and bent frightened eyes upon Gladys.

"I didn't say anything while I was asleep, did I?" she asked.

"No, nothing at all. Did your nap refresh you?"

"Nothing refreshes me. Before I went off did I say anything—foolish, I mean? About—Harold, or money—or anything?"

"Nothing foolish—except that you

didn't want to see him again. That was foolish, wasn't it?"

"Did I say why?" she asked eagerly.

"You didn't want him to look at you—reproachfully, I suppose—as he did the last time you saw him!"

"Ah!" breathed the older woman, with a sigh of relief.

And then Miss Day came in, and Gladys was free to escape the sick room of that saddest, most contemptible of all the aged—the spoiled, selfish ex-beauty's.

That night Miss Day called her up on the telephone.

"The end is near," she said. "Doctor Arthur and Doctor Jennison have both done all they could, but they say there is no hope. She got at her sleeping drops to-night. It was not my fault; indeed it was not, Miss Cartwright. She had a key to the medicine case about which I knew nothing. And she has taken an overdose. It was while I was at dinner, and she made some errand up to get rid of Rosalie, who was sitting with her. I did not know she had strength to reach the cabinet—truly it was not my fault. But before I left her to go to dinner, she insisted upon having writing materials—she would not dictate to me as she usually did. And there is a note partly directed to you here. Do you want it at once? There is sure to be an investigation, and maybe you would rather not have it turned over to the authorities."

Gladys had the note sent to the house. It was scrawled and uncertain on the monogrammed and scented paper.

If you go out there and find Harold, he will tell you the truth. I could not bear to see him again, after all. I do not want to live, I am in such pain always.

The night he came and asked me for that money, I ought to have been able to get it for him; there had been more than that left in trust for him when his father died. I was the trustee. When he came of age, I did not make an accounting of the trust fund—I kept putting it off. Finally I told him I had invested it in my own name, and that I would make an accounting by and by.

But the truth was I had lost it all in speculation. It was in his blood, that gambler's streak. And when he came to me that night and told me he had raised money on stolen securities, he relied upon my being

able to get his own inheritance together and to save him. It makes him a little less black—and me a little more so.

But I wanted you to know the best about him, Gladys, even if it was also the worst about me. I had thought I could arrange things for us all by marrying Ryan, though he was unbearable to me. But fate stepped in and foiled me there. Be good to my boy. I know that you will. Life is a horror unless one is religious or very good, but death does not seem so.

JULIE L.

The tears rained down Gladys' cheeks. Her heart was torn with pity for the dying woman. Surely, surely, she thought, that poor soul had known the final bitterness of existence. She knew herself to have bequeathed faults and weaknesses to her son, and to have failed him in his time of need.

CHAPTER XII.

As she journeyed across the continent, Gladys struggled hard to win the elation that she knew was the proper emotion for her condition. She was traveling West to meet the man who had loved her and who had so appealed to her that she had never lost the sense of his love and his need of her. After years he had been found—and he had been found such a one as she had sometimes not dared to hope he would be—clean-living, hard-working, responsible.

Moreover—and this was the knowledge that she felt ought to have painted the future in the rosiest possible colors for her—he had, of his own volition, done what she had expected it would be part of the labor before her to persuade him to do. He had made restitution to the bank.

She remembered the morning in the crowded week after Mrs. Lederlie's funeral when Nora had brought word that Mr. Ryan wished to see her. She remembered the distaste with which she had gone downstairs to receive that flourishing manufacturer and bank president. She feared that he had come on some errand connected with Mrs. Lederlie—his roses had been overpoweringly conspicuous at the dead lady's funeral.

But she was immediately undeceived. It was no belated or hypocritical senti-

ment which brought the president of the bank to her doors. It was business. He had arisen and greeted her ponderously.

"I have come here to congratulate you, Miss Cartwright, and to restore certain property to you."

Gladys wondered vaguely what she had dropped, and where she had dropped it. She looked at him inquiringly.

"Yes, my dear Miss Cartwright. And to acknowledge myself less keen a judge of human nature than you, with all the disadvantages of your youth, your sex, your inexperience in the business world. Five years ago, when you came to me and persuaded me that for the sake of an estimable lady, then alive, and of her husband, then dead, it would be well for the directors of the bank to drop the case against young Mr. Harold Lederlie—the sum which we had lost through him being paid—I thought that you were a sentimental young lady. When you told me that you were prepared, out of your own small fortune, to pay the money, I considered you very foolish. When you told me that you knew—that you were certain—that young Mr. Harold Lederlie would, in the fullness of time, make restitution himself, I thought you were insane—mad of love! I honored you for your womanly blindness, but I believed it none the less to be just that—just womanly blindness. You remember I warned you that I believed you to be parting with twenty thousand dollars for all time when you advanced them to pay the theft—the debt, let us call it now—of Mr. Lederlie?"

Gladys nodded. She watched him with intent eyes. Would he ever be through with his pompous preamble, and tell her what he had come to tell?

"Miss Cartwright, it was you who were right, it was I who was wrong. I thought I knew the type of the speculating, embezzling young man. I thought I knew that there was no reforming him. I was mistaken—unless the letter which I have this day received merely means that Mr. Lederlie's recent ventures have turned out more profitably than the one at our institution."

"Oh, no!" cried Gladys.

"I echo your sentiment, Miss Cartwright. It does you honor. I put the unworthy suspicion away. I have this morning received from a South American city the sum of twenty thousand dollars with a reasonable interest for five years, sent on behalf of Mr. Harold Lederlie. I congratulate you on the triumph of your trust in human nature. And I congratulate you upon the restoration of your property, which I now make you."

He tendered her a certified check. She took it with trembling fingers.

"Thank you, Mr. Ryan. The South American city—does that mean that Mr. Lederlie is in South America?"

"I should think it extremely unlikely. I should think it pointed rather to his being in Asia or Alaska, or some place far removed from South America. His agent makes no suggestion as to his client's whereabouts, and if Mr. Lederlie has, as I suppose we may infer, changed his name, sunk his identity, and all that, it is very unlikely that he would give his family or his old friends—or the detectives, if they were still after him—any such clew on which to work, as his right address. Again my congratulations, Miss Cartwright. Good morning."

"Good morning. Thank you so very much, Mr. Ryan. I am glad you have come to recognize that one fall, in the face of a great temptation, does not mean total depravity of nature. I was sure I could count on Mr. Lederlie's coming to his senses. There are moral insanities, you know, as well as intellectual aberrations."

"The man who would not regain his moral sanity with you in his life would be a monstrosity, Miss Cartwright," declared Mr. Ryan floridly as he took his leave of her.

And on the train she was trying to warm her unaccountably chilly heart with the memory of that interview—that interview which proved that her judgment of Harold had been the true one. But the triumph left her only faintly glad. And the thought of the approaching meeting left her only faintly excited.

Well, she supposed that the last few years and the last few weeks had somewhat exhausted her powers of acute feeling. One could not live forever in a state of exaltation. Then she fell to speculating upon what she should do if the unbelievable had happened and Harold had ceased to care for her. He was not married. Lewis had assured her of that. She could not make the theory real enough to her imagination to worry over it. Indeed, in her apathetic state, she was not at all sure that she would worry over it if it were true.

The incidents of the journey that would normally have filled her with pleasure gave her only a languid interest. Indian women boarding the train at Western stations with their sleek, black hair, their strings of beads, and offering for sale the knickknacks dear to tourists' hearts, she regarded as inattentively as if they were daily features of life in Winterbury. Ah, well, perhaps she would care more about them on her return trip!

Her first view of the Rockies stirred her with none of the emotion that grandeur in nature usually had power to arouse in her. The plains, the colors—ocher and sapphire—the vastness of the distances, the nearness of the great, velvety stars at night, the glimpses of adobe settlements, all the unfamiliar setting of life, usually so delightful to her, passed her by. She even felt, fretfully, some of the discomforts of travel, and grumbled to herself when she had to change cars in the middle of the night, her destination being off on a side line which the great Overland did not traverse.

Early the morning after this change, she left the train at Copper City—a sprawling village baking under a cloudless sky on the edge of the earth, she thought. She looked quickly among the loafers at the station—Mexicans, an Indian or two, a few sombre-robed Americans—for the familiar face of her friend. It beamed upon her, browned and kind, beneath a wide-rimmed hat.

Feeling rushed back upon her. Warmth of heart glowed again. She had not forgotten how to be glad, after all!

But when they had gone to the hotel at which he thought it advisable for her to put up, when she had freshened after her long journey, and had breakfasted, and he had told her of the plans he had made for going up to Harold's ranch, the curious apathy stole upon her again.

"I almost wonder if it would not have been better for you to go first," she hazarded.

Lewis darkened under his new tan.

"Gladys," he told her, "I think that you know I would do almost anything on earth for you. But don't ask me to go and tell him that you have believed in him, and waited for him—that you are waiting to give him the greatest gift a man ever had!" He spoke with a passion that somehow thrilled her. She felt a blush dye her cheek. "Besides," he went on more calmly, "he wouldn't want it. Don't you know, my dear girl, he would resent the intimacy which my being your messenger would imply?"

"He is not so unjust, so ungenerous, as that," protested Gladys.

"He is very human and very masculine, I should say. That means unreasonable at times, Gladys. I'm proving to you how unreasonable; for I have worked with you without a single second thought for more than five years, and to-day—to-day I feel selfish. I don't want to give up my friendship with you."

"Nothing in the world could bring that to pass," she told him, raising starry eyes affectionately toward him. "Nothing. Our friendship is founded on a rock. You helped me through the bitterest days of my life. Harold," she ended weakly, "Harold will thank you as I cannot. It's too much a part of me—your goodness, your friendship—to be making thankful speeches about."

"Don't have a golden dream from which you will be obliged to wake, Gladys. Harold, strive as he may, will never be able to take deeply into his affections the man who bound up the wounds that he inflicted. I shouldn't be able to. It would add a sting to the memory of my own unworthiness to think that any other man had been a help to some one whom it was my glo-

rious right to shield, and whom I had neglected, hurt. Don't nourish delusions! I don't nourish one. I know that when we have ridden up to the door of his shack, and he has seen you, my part in your life is played."

"Nonsense!" said Gladys feebly.

But the conviction that he spoke the truth weighed heavily upon her spirit. She set the date of the trip out to Harold's ranch three days later. She explained her delay by murmuring that she wanted to see the city of Copper.

It was a dreary enough little place, unkempt, unattractive. But she found it better than the purposed ride across the hills. The three days passed quickly enough. She rode with Lewis. She ate in Chinese restaurants with Lewis. She visited the great smelting works with Lewis. She bought curios in the little curio shop with Lewis. And upon them both was the conviction that they were together for the last time.

On the fourth day they started early in the incomparable freshness of the morning. She had been made aware that she was regarded as a trifle unconventional by some of the ladies sojourning in the Palace Hotel, who declared that for all her distinction of bearing and reserve of manner—she had met their exuberant confidences with no corresponding frankness—she must be a queer girl. She was, even if not very young, much too young to be traveling about the country unchaperoned except by that eccentric professor. And when they heard that she planned a day's ride into the wilderness—destination not obtained by the committee appointed for the purpose of obtaining it—with him and a guide, their shocked countenances grew more shocked still.

But Gladys, made aware of all this buzz concerning herself, had been serenely unmoved by it. Her experiences of life had lifted her above the fear of scandal, above any interest in herself as a storm center of gossip. Always to do what she believed to be right and to disregard the consequences—for how long a time now had that been her code!

But Lewis had also heard comments upon her behavior in arriving unher-

alded, unaccompanied by any woman, in being so openly and constantly with him, in planning a long ride with him. The comments had angered him as he had not suspected that it remained in his middle-aged temper to be angered.

And as he rode by her side this morning, toward the violet reaches of the hills, he realized as he had never yet realized how tender was his regard for her. He told himself, at last, the truth about those years of deepest companionship. He loved her! He loved her! For many years he had aided her in the one object of her life—to find the man to whom he must give her up. What a fool, what a fool he had been!

The gentle melancholy of her bearing told him that she, too, understood, unconsciously perhaps, that this marked the end of their close comradeship. He was grateful to her for that mark of sorrow, for the pallor of her lovely, curved cheeks, the abstraction of her great, gray eyes. How beautiful, how good, how incomparably sweet she was! Why had he not used those years of close association to win her for himself? After all, she had been but an impulsive, high-minded girl five years ago. He might have driven Harold from her thoughts. He might have enthroned himself in that gentle dominion.

And then he acknowledged that it was Gladys, the pure, the impractical idealist, that he loved. He would never have known such a passion of reverence for a merely "sweet" girl, however quickly he might have forgiven such a one for forgetting an unworthy lover for a worthy one.

They camped at noon beneath a juniper tree, and the guide made them coffee of exceeding bitterness, and fried them bacon of uncommon greasiness. But the aromatic fragrance of the tree was in their nostrils; before their eyes stretched the world as it might have stretched before the first man and the first woman—endless, untouched by human hands—rolling, brown, and dun, and blue, toward cloudy lines of deeper color against the incomparable blue of the sky.

If only they were the first man and

the first woman! Or if only they were the last! If even now a thunderbolt would but cleave the sunlight and the Final Judgment come—with them together, with them together!

He set his lips upon a groan that wanted to come.

Oh, if only they were settlers here together, a rough, hardy man of the hills, and his mate—how happy he would have been! How gladly would he have thrown over all that he had attained just to be that! He remembered the farm in which he had been born. He remembered his laborious years, the hard-fought struggle for an education, all the mean, close, toilsome processes by which at last he had attained his ambition. Well, now he would joyously forego all that he had ever learned, all that he had achieved of scholarly renown, to be faring through this uncultivated, bookless country side by side with her forever.

"You folks 'bout rested?" queried the guide. "Won't much more than make it by sundown."

It was sunset when they reached the clearing in which Lamb's cabin stood. The sky above the hills was full of torn clouds of splendid carmine and gold; the cañons were flooded with light; the eastern sky took on the glory of the west in the pale reflections.

But Gladys, who loved the sky and who loved all beauty, had blind eyes for it all. Her gaze was fixed on the small cabin ahead. Her face had grown very white and her eyes very dark.

Lewis discreetly sent the guide back a way, and the two rode forward alone. Before the door Lewis gave a loud "Hello!" From behind a shed a man, with grain in a wooden receptacle, appeared—bronzed, bearded, handsome—Harold Lederlie. He looked toward the strangers unrecognizingly for a moment. Then the bucket fell from his hand.

"Gladys!" he cried.

And in the confusion of the second she could not hear that there was more of fright than of gladness in his tones. He paused for a moment. Then he came forward.

"Let me help you down," he said, and she slid wearily from her horse.

He stood holding her arm to support her. His face was grave, suddenly pale under his tan, but resolute.

"This—this—Hal—is—is the friend who has helped me look for you all these years—Mr. McDougal. Oh!" cried poor Gladys, suddenly bursting into tears. "I cannot, I cannot bear it all!"

The men told one another in masculine fashion that she was completely overwrought, tired out, wearied beyond endurance.

"But before we go into the house," said Lederlie, "before I can ask you to come and rest, Gladys, I—there is something I must tell you."

He hesitated. He flushed miserably. He fell completely silent. Gladys looked at him with returning animation in her eyes, returning color in her cheeks. Lewis watched him with grim-set jaws and clenched hands.

"Harold!" cried the girl rapturously. "You're married!"

Her voice was like a peal of joyful bells. The two men stared at her. There were thanksgiving and incomprehension on each face.

"How did you know? It only happened last week. I never could ask her until I had—squared—you know what. She's gone up to her mother's. But—if you're pleased like this—how do you happen to be here, Gladys?"

"I never dreamed I should be pleased like this!" cried Gladys. "Oh, Lewis, Lewis! Tell him everything! Isn't the world wonderful and beautiful? And now we shall always be friends!"

But her radiant face paled a little before what she saw in his eyes.

"Friends, please Heaven, yes; but more than friends, more than friends, my dearest."

Thus, before the other man, he made his offer of marriage, and before the other man she answered him tremulously:

"More than friends, forever!"

And then they entered upon explanations with one another.



Able Seaman Blythe

By Wallace Irwin

ILLUSTRATED BY H.Y. MAYER

A VERY able mariner—
There's scarce his equal far or near
Upon the billows lithe—
The ablest Jack
Of the naval pack
Was Able Seaman Blythe.

Whatever the emergency
Or quick alarm of urgency
In stormy seas or fair,
Whatever the task
You'd chance to ask,
Why, presto! Blythe was there.

He reefed a sail with smartest skill,
And with a subtle artist skill
The capting's socks he spun.

He tended Abey,
The capting's baby,
And fired the sunset gun.

He slaved where others would rebel;
A pirate ship he could repel
In time of stress and strife;
With equal zeal
He could cook a meal
Or fan the capting's wife.

'Twas off the coast of Kimberley,
The capting's wife sat limberly
A-sewing napkins wide.
A stitch she skipped,
Her thimble slipped
And fell into the tide.

"I reely tried to ketch it, mum—
Set still and I will fetch it, mum,"

Obliging Blythe cried he.
Then, baring his throat,
He doffed his coat,
And dove into the sea.

Full forty fathoms crawling down
He saw the thimble falling down,
When lo! a codfish gay
That thimble espied;
And, jaws oped wide,
He gobbled it away.

This deed of deep-sea knavery
Galled forth our hero's bravery.
Straight for that cod he sped,
And grabbed its tail—
But no avail;
For, from the ocean bed

A shark riz up vorociously,
Ate up that cod atrociously,
And paused a while to gloat,
Till our hero, displeased,
Jumped in and seized
That monster by the throat.

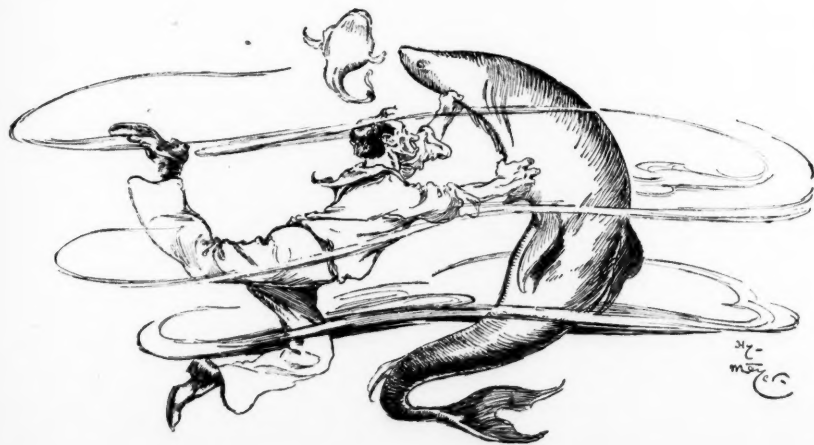
The shark began to strangulate,
To twist, and squirm, and angulate.

Then, with a bubbling spout,
He turned on his side,
And as he died,
He spit that codfish out.

So Blythe with hands methodical,
He grabed that little codicle,
And slit him with a knife;
The thimble he thumbed,
And backward swummed
Unto the capting's wife.

"I've been both brave and nimble, mum,
And got fer ye yer thimble, mum,"
Exclaimed our hero strong.
"Indeedy!" said she,
"It seems to me
It took ye powerful long!

"Step lively, if ye're able, sir—
Weigh anchor, set the table, sir,
And earn yer daily tithe!"
With quavering knees,
"I strive to please,"
Said Able Seaman Blythe.





New Interests for Mother

By Anne O'Hagan

ILLUSTRATED BY LAURA E. FOSTER

DEEPLY rooted in the hearts and philosophies of the Misses Ripon, aged respectively twenty-one and twenty-seven, was the belief that a leisurely air and a manner of peaceful indolence were graceful and becoming attributes for sixty-five years. Deeply rooted in the heart and philosophy of Mrs. Ripon, aged sixty-five, was the belief that labor is a good, even a glorious thing, and that never is a woman so well qualified to judge her fitness for it as when she is approaching her three-score-and-ten milepost. These two theories, forced to dwell together within the somewhat limited confines of a seven-room apartment, occasionally collided; but, both being of strong and tenacious habit, neither had been seriously damaged in the encounters, although as much could not be said for Mrs. Ripon or her daughters.

"Sh!" Emily Ripon said to her older sister, warning finger against her lips, perturbation in her face, as she opened the door that gave entrance to the Ripons' own tunnel on the fourth floor of the Park-Overlook Apartments. "Sh! Mother's lying down—a headache."

Anxiety sprang full-grown into Sarah's gray eyes.

"A headache?" she whispered, as she followed her sister on tiptoe past the cell-like entrances on the right hand of the tunnel wall to the sitting room at the front.

Emily nodded gloomily. Sarah,

dropping into a green wicker chair without even laying down the Latin exercise books she had brought home for correction from Miss De Peyster's Select Preparatory and Finishing School for Young Ladies, questioned her sister wearily with her eyes for some further explanation.

Emily drew the green portières over the hall door, and despairingly explained.

"She thinks, poor dear," she said, "that it was my abominable and undutiful behavior when I came in and found her doing up our linen suits. It's really because she's tired out from the tubs and the ironing board."

Thunders gathered upon Miss Sarah Ripon's brow.

"Where," she demanded, "is Nora? Why wasn't she doing up the suits?"

"Nora's sister in Long Island City sent for her just after breakfast. Somebody's sick, or arrested, or something."

"But why on earth should mother do—"

"Exactly," replied Emily to the unfinished question. "Why should she rush to the tubs? Why couldn't she leave those wretched suits alone? That was exactly what I wanted to know. And because I wanted to know it—I was mad, Sarah, and I'm afraid I may have been a little cross—and because she was so tired, mother couldn't eat her lunch and—here we are again!"

"It seems to me, Emily, that with all the experience we've had in trying to

reason with mother when she's in the midst of one of her attacks, you might have deferred your filial lecture," remarked Sarah, with some exasperation.

"I admit it, Sarah. But you'd have been a little ruffled yourself if you came dashing in with a tennis racket in your hand, like a model for 'June' on a picture calendar, and with a strange young man in tow, and had been met by mother in a wet blue apron, and bare, steaming arms, with her reverend locks in damp disorder."

"What were you doing with a strange young man?" Sarah's attention was immediately deflected from the day's grievance.

"It was one of the people who live in the apartment above," replied Emily indifferently. "He had locked himself out, and didn't have his key, and he met me in the hall as I came in from tennis in the park, and begged the use of our fire escape to his kitchen window which he said was open. Wouldn't it have made you rather weary if you had been leading in the stranger, and had been met by a mother who looked like an overworked laundress?"

Sarah nodded.

"Was it the tall, thin one, or the shortish one with the blue eyes?"

Emily stared at her for a second.

Really, I didn't notice," she replied. "It was one of them. But what are we going to do about mother, Sarah?"

Sarah was tired. The late May day was warm, the season had been long in which she had instructed Miss De Peyster's young ladies in the use of the dative and the ablative absolute, and allied items of useful knowledge. The thin notebooks of the class in Latin composition fell to the floor with a soft bump as she leaned back and closed her lids wearily.

"I hope it wasn't the shortish one with the blue eyes," she said in a dragging voice. "He looks as if he would see everything."

"I didn't care so much about him—we don't know the people upstairs, but it might just as well have been Teddie Lawrence or Alma whom I was bringing home. I'd been playing with them.

You know what their mothers are like—point lace, and attar of roses, and the news of the world presented to them on a silver salver. And, anyway, it isn't just the looks of the thing; it isn't just because two healthy, able-bodied young women don't care to appear in the eyes of the community as a pair of educated pigs who play tennis and go to matinees while their aged parent does the scrubbing. It's because she does work too hard! She gets herself tired out! What are we going to do about it, Sarah?"

"Well, I'll be home after two weeks from Tuesday," said Sarah, opening her eyes. "And I'll play policeman until we all go to the Point for August. She can't do the housework in a Maine shore hotel."

"No, but she'll do up the fine shirt waists and collars on the sly," predicted Emily, with the gloomy certainty afforded by the recollection of other summers.

"Maybe not. And, after all, I suppose she does it all because the city doesn't offer her any other absorbing interests. She came here so late in life! When we come back we must find something to take up her time, to interest her. If only she had her garden!"

But a garden was as impossible of compassing in the seven-room-and-bath apartment overlooking Central Park when the family returned in September, as it had been in May. Mrs. Ripon, full of the energy imparted by the tonic air of the Point, eyed the dusty rooms joyfully. She had not dwelt for so long a period with her daughters without learning somewhat to dissemble, but her fine, old face sparkled as she looked about her.

With specious words, she shut the door of the tunnel upon Sarah and Emily, when, the morning after their return, these two departed; Sarah to capture a specimen of that disappearing species, the general houseworker, for the household use, and Emily to visit the art school of Mr. Clive, and to arrange for her winter's work with him.

"There never yet was a girl," ob-



Miss Sarah Ripon was instructing her mother in the gentle art of knitting.

served Mrs. Ripon to the discreet silence after she had waited at the hall door to overhear the last click of her daughters' heels upon the tessellated floor two flights below, "who knew how to clean an ice chest or a cupboard properly."

It would require no mind reader to infer that Mrs. Ripon felt herself complete mistress of both these arts.

From the depths of her bedroom closet, she brought forth a dingy garment of the genus wrapper and an old apron. Some faded gingham from an ancient rag bag provided her with the material for an impromptu mobcap, and within five minutes a dignified and graceful old lady had been transformed into an elderly drudge. To be sure, she sang a little as, with hot water, and soda, and scrubbing brushes, and soaps, and cloths, she wrought her cleansing will upon the refrigerator and the kitchen cupboard.

But of this alleviating circumstance the young man, blue-eyed and shortish, who rang her bell and desired to give her a package of coffee delivered by

mistake to his abode immediately above, could not be expected to be aware.

"By Jove, it's a shame!" he told himself. "Poor old lady! One wouldn't expect so much of the younger, tennisy-looking girl, but that older one looks as if she had the rudiments of a heart in her bosom."

And Mr. John Henry O'Brien, who had the strong convictions concerning the proper treatment of mothers which only a man orphaned of his own at the age of four could possess, went back upstairs, shaking his head sadly.

Before he left late that afternoon for his work as night copy reader on the *Globe-Record*, he confided to his fellow Park-Overlooker dweller, Mr. R. Wentworth Perkins, instructor in sociology in one of the city's colleges, his opinion that those two good-looking girls downstairs were a pair of young brutes.

"Maybe the old lady likes it," hazarded Mr. Perkins, filling his pipe lazily.

Although not claiming to be an authority on the tastes of old ladies, he had a hazy recollection of household

arguments between his sisters and his own mother on the subject of the cook's ability to make clear soup; and he vaguely recalled that the elder Mrs. Perkins declared that, though she should have the most famous of French chefs in her kitchen, she would trust the concoction of this delicacy to no other hand than her own.

But Mr. O'Brien rapidly overbore him in the argument; a little fine cooking was one thing, he assured his friend; heavy manual labor, involving the use of pails and mops and scrubbing brushes, was quite another.

Mr. Perkins did not long contest the point. He had no interest either in proving the two young ladies callous and selfish or in championing them. Not being clairvoyant, it did not occur to him that Mr. O'Brien denounced them with the unconscious hope of hearing them defended, if out of no better reason than mere contrariety.

A few weeks later he announced to the indifferent Mr. Perkins that he had reason to change his opinion somewhat concerning the elder Miss Ripon.

"She isn't quite such a cold-blooded little beast as that pretty young sister," he declared, with satisfaction. "You know my aunt's in town—the one from Colorado. Well, I had to take her to

a suffrage rally—one of those parlor meetings—and there, whom should I run into but old Mrs. Ripon, and, with her, Sarah—that's the older one."

"Is it, indeed?" observed Mr. Perkins, looking up somewhat inquisitively at his friend.

"Well, her mother calls her that."

"You don't yourself then—yet?"

Mr. O'Brien shied a convenient sofa cushion at his companion's head.

"Shut up, you old fool," he said amiably. "I'm telling you a fact of psychological interest, and you begin talking like the lady who answers the questions of inquiring lovers in the afternoon edition of the paper. I was glad to see, for my part, that there was one of those girls downstairs who didn't want to keep her mother's nose to the grindstone all the time. She's a good-looking old lady when she's dressed—she's got a refined, clear-cut face."

"Something like—Sarah's?" inquired Mr. Perkins, and Mr. O'Brien, natural-

ly disgusted, desisted from any further attempts to enlighten his friend on the virtues or the shortcomings of the girls downstairs.

Meantime, Sarah was reporting in despair to Emily the result of the first conscientious effort to enlist mother's interests in something outside the house.

"I thought surely that suffrage would



From behind one of the chimneys emerged the figure of Mrs. Ripon.

do it," wailed Sarah. "You know how independent she is, and what a feminist. But when the secretary of Mrs. Vincent's club—you know, the Eighty-fourth-Street-Tuesday-Afternoon suffragists—came up after the meeting, and tried to enroll her, what do you suppose she said?"

"Give it up," replied Emily.

"She said there were two things she couldn't do well; she couldn't make speeches well, and she couldn't listen to them patiently. So she wanted to know what would be the sense of her joining a club where only those two things were done. She would put herself on record as often as any one wanted her to by signing petitions, but she simply couldn't waste her time in listening to a lot of women, whose views she knew already, state those views."

"Well," sighed Emily meditatively, "that didn't work. I'm losing faith in the suffrage cause myself; it has always seemed to me the finest outlet in the world for the superfluous energy of elderly ladies. If it isn't good for that I don't know that I'm so very keen about it. I wonder," meditatively, "if she hasn't the makings of a bridge fiend in her."

Guilefully they sought to win their mother from the ardor of her household labors by pretending themselves an eager interest in the game. Valiantly they labored until a neighborhood bridge club was formed, of which Mrs. Ripon was a duly enrolled, if not a duly zealous, member.

But this was far from proving all that they had hoped. One Tuesday afternoon—the club met on Tuesdays immediately after luncheon, and its sessions continued up to the dinner hour—Sarah came home from Miss De Peyster's with her heart at rest. Whatever else might be happening, her mother was not at home working on undignified tasks beyond her years. No, she was around the corner playing bridge with other graceful, idle, alert ladies of all ages.

This pleasing knowledge imparted a particularly cordial quality to the recognition she bestowed upon Mr.

O'Brien, emerging from the drug store at the corner; they had had a speaking acquaintance since the afternoon of the suffrage meeting. They walked to the Park-Overlook together, and the young man succeeded in letting it be known that his spirit fainted within him for a cup of tea prepared by feminine hands.

Sarah was in the mood to be good-natured. She asked Mr. O'Brien to come in and have his fainting spirit revived by a cup of tea. Mr. O'Brien accepted the invitation with great alacrity. Sarah's key turned in the lock, and she led the way toward the pretty sitting room at the forward end of the long tunnel.

There on the floor before the fireplace—which was a miserable makeshift, holding only a gas log, and deserving no such labors as were bestowed upon it—sat Mrs. Ripon surrounded by pastes, and ointments, and polishing cloths, hard at work upon the fireplace brasses.

"Mother!" cried Sarah, rebuke, inquiry, and dismay in her voice.

Mrs. Ripon scrambled guiltily to her feet. A smudge of red paste disfigured the aquiline distinction of her nose. Sarah, thirsting for vengeance, nevertheless desired to have so undignified a spectacle removed as quickly as possible from the keen blue eyes of the shortish young man from upstairs. Her mother's incoherent explanation was allowed to go unchallenged.

Tea was a melancholy function, and not even Mrs. Ripon's reappearance, with perfectly clean face and well-chosen garments, restored the buoyancy and intimacy which had prevailed between Miss Ripon and Mr. O'Brien from the drug store to the door of the Ripon sitting room.

This time Mr. O'Brien meditated secretly upon the shortcomings of daughters, and did not confide to his friend anything concerning the encounter. As for Sarah, once the door had closed upon his countenance, she had fallen into a stony silence. Words were inadequate to express her disappointment and her disapproval. Moreover, she

had long since learned their utter powerlessness to affect her mother to anything more than tears and temper; as a reforming agency they were worthless. She would now try the effect of a speechless rigidity.

And so, when Mrs. Ripon apologetically remarked that old Mrs. Day had a cousin from Ohio visiting her who simply loved bridge, and that, therefore, she, Mrs. Ripon, was not needed, and that she had therefore come home to clean the brasses, her daughter listened to the story without comment. Not even to Emily's sympathetic ears did she pour forth the tale, when that young person came in at dinner time. Something too precious, she felt, had been mysteriously lost that day to be talked about, even to one's sympathetic sister.

The winter wore on. Something in Mr. O'Brien urged him to seek Miss Sarah Ripon's society more strongly than his admirable theories of filial behavior urged him to leave her severely alone. As soon as time had decently dulled his recollection of the elderly woman bent ungracefully over a laborious task, he sought Miss Ripon out again.

The Fates being kindly disposed that evening—it was his "night off" from the *Globe-Record*—he stumbled upon a pleasant household picture; Miss Sarah Ripon was instructing her mother in the gentle art of knitting, while Miss Emily, squatted before the gas log, somehow succeeded in toasting at its unpromising blaze a box of marshmallows.

It was certainly an improvement upon his last visit, and his spirits soared. He immediately relegated the episode of the brasses to the limbo of forgotten things. How very sweet Sarah's dark head looked, bent close to her mother's white one, as together they calculated the number of pink woolen loops on the long bone needle! How graceful was her neck, how charming the round bodice of the muslin gown which revealed it! Altogether he had a delightful evening, which not even the courteous necessity of eating some of

Emily's gaseously flavored sugar paste could mar.

John Henry O'Brien went upstairs that night, treacherously calculating how much more cheaply a married man could live than a single one keeping house with a bachelor friend. The next morning he dropped a note into the Ripon letter box, inviting Miss Sarah to go to the theater, and he went downtown whistling, and bestowing more attention than he had ever before upon the contents of decorators' and house-furnishers' windows.

That night it snowed. The next morning Mr. O'Brien awoke to observe the ceiling above his bed darkly stained with moisture. A drop struck him between the eyebrows. Arising, he tried to communicate this intelligence to the janitor, but the janitor was, according to his almost invariable custom, absent.

Mr. O'Brien dressed himself, sought his breakfast in the chop house around the corner, and returned to find the spot larger than ever. The sad-voiced woman, who "did" for him and his friend, opined that there was a leak in the roof.

Mr. O'Brien ascended the flight of stairs between his apartment and the roof, and climbed out upon that snowy waste, punctuated here and there with chimneys and poles for clotheslines. From behind one of the chimneys emerged the figure of Mrs. Ripon, her skirts pinned high, her pretty white hair covered with a woolen scarf.

The snow had ceased, and the sun was shining brightly. Mrs. Ripon was pinning upon the clothesline pieces of snowy napery. No one but the daughters could know her passion for "doing up" the best table linen.

Mr. O'Brien went downstairs, having discovered the leak, in a mood half cynical, half sorrowful, and altogether sore. The pretty pictures of devoted daughterliness, he told himself, were staged for the evening, when visitors might be expected to happen in; the private views of the Ripon family life were less charming, less inspiring to matrimonially minded young men. On the whole, he and old Perky got along very well as they were. They did not

need any such domestic charm imported into their existence as he had been dreaming of last night.

And on the afternoon of the day when he was to take Sarah to the theater, he sent her two tickets and a cold little note instead of appearing himself, alleging that one of the convenient exigencies of newspaper life had imperatively summoned him to Washington.

As a matter of fact, he went to Washington on an errand of his own devising, and thought gloomily all the way over of the sad falling off there had been in girls since the good old days when they were trained to respect age and to spare its weakness.

He had, of course, no immediate opportunity of learning that Sarah had checked her first impulse, which was to tear his tickets in two when they arrived unaccompanied by him, and had instead insisted upon Emily taking their mother to see the play.

"I suppose it's because I never knew my own mother that I care so much about the idea of mothers," Mr. O'Brien continued to tell himself as he transacted his business in Washington, and as he returned to New York. "But I do care about it—I do. More than about any other idea in the world, more than about a wife. A man can have any number of wives—in reason; but not of mothers. There is something about them—Lord, I don't know how to express it even to myself—but there's something about them that grips me; if I had one, I bet I'd treat her right. I wouldn't make a drudge of her. And to think of a woman's doing it—a woman who might be expected to realize a little something about what they go through, first and last, those mothers!"

He got off the elevated train at the station nearest the Park-Overlook, and started to walk toward that hive of



"I suppose I look like an awful fool," she began.

dwellings, still brooding a little bitterly over the unappreciated mothers in the world, and still congratulating himself not very whole-heartedly that he had been no harder hit by Sarah, when he walked directly into that young woman herself. That they collided was due to the fact that both of them were failing to look where they were going. Even had Sarah been looking, she could not have seen, for her eyes were full of tears which not even the twilight could hide.

"Why, Miss Ripon!" exclaimed O'Brien, forgetting, for the second, the list of his charges against her. "Is anything the matter—are you—is there something—"

He broke off helplessly. Sarah was endeavoring, by biting her lips, to keep back a swifter rain of tears.

"Your mother? Your sister? I hope there is nothing serious the matter?"

O'Brien besought her to give him a clew to her grief. Sarah jerked out, between sobs:

"They're—they're—both all right—thank you." Her voice quavered ridiculously on the "thank."

"You yourself?" begged O'Brien, with considerable anxiety for a young man who had so recently decided her not to be worth a second thought.

"I'm all right," quavered Sarah, jabbing at her eyes with a wet little wad of a handkerchief.

O'Brien, who had turned, and was walking by her side, unobtrusively produced a large, folded masculine square of linen, and presented it to her.

"I suppose I look like an awful fool," she began when she had her voice under some control. "But I've been having a fearful row with mother, and that always does me up!"

"A row—with your mother?"

Mr. O'Brien could scarcely articulate the sacrilegious words. Sarah nodded.

"Yes, a row—just a nasty, vulgar row! We're due to have two a year, and I've forgotten whether this is the first or the second."

Mr. O'Brien received this shocking announcement in silence. His vocabulary was inadequate to his emotions.

"You see," Sarah went on, with the candor of unhappiness, "she thinks that we're dictatorial, and we think that she is inconsiderate and unreasonable. I know it's the proper thing for dutiful children to keep such opinions to themselves; but when she makes herself positively ill, how can one be silent then? And as soon as one says anything—oh, well, then accusations and counter-accusations begin, and by and by she takes to her room with a headache, and I take to the street, like this."

"But," began the perplexed Mr. O'Brien, "what is it all about?"

"It's about work," wailed Miss Sarah Ripon. "Until we came to New York mother always had a big house in a vil-

lage to manage. There was lots for her to do, and she did it beautifully. There never was"—she spoke with proud conviction—"such a housekeeper as my mother. Well, we come here to New York, and take a seven-room apartment where half of our work is done for us automatically—fires, and all that, I mean. But she wants to keep just as busy as she used to be, and she distrusts all servants—you can't blame her for that—and she's always overdoing and tiring herself out and getting headaches. And giving false impressions, too!" Sarah's tones grew defiant. "In North Hilton every one knew all about it, and if they saw mother beating the rugs while I sat reading a book they would know perfectly well that she was doing it because she wanted to, and because she believed that no one could do it so well. While here——" She broke off in an illuminating gesture of despair. "It was carpet cleaning to-day," she resumed, and concluded.

Mr. O'Brien's face had brightened during Sarah's incoherent recital. Now he said, with deep conviction:

"Nobody could meet you, Miss Ripon, and believe that you ever willingly left any hard work for your mother to do. It's one of the tragedies of age," he went on glibly, "to be obliged to give up doing what one does well. It's the great tragedy of age. I understand how your mother feels. The thing to do"—he spoke sapiently—"is to give her new interests."

"New interests!" It would be rude to call Miss Sarah Ripon's speech a snort, but it is certain that she at least sniffed scornfully. "New interests! I'd like to see you give them to her!"

"I'll wager I could!" replied Mr. O'Brien daringly. "I'll wager anything you like that your mother could be enormously interested if you would only give her an idea of sufficient importance. Not your twopenny bridge, and suffrage, and that, but something really worth while. For instance——" He fell silent for a moment, and resumed his speech less assuredly: "For instance—weddings—new homes. Shall we go and ask her?"



Why Meg is Not Married

By Elizabeth Newport Hepburn

ILLUSTRATED BY R. G. VOSBURGH

WHY don't you get married?" said Auntie Meg.

Niece Meg swung her feet in a little-girl fashion, which came natural in spite of her almost thirty years, and looked at almost-fifty-year Auntie Meg with clear eyes and a little shrug of her straight shoulders.

"Why don't I get married?" she pondered. "Why don't I get married; why don't I get married? That's the burden of everybody's song, and even of my own. It's the question that perfect strangers ask me, and old friends, and even children! Yes, why *don't* I get married?"

"At your age I had been married six years, and now it's twenty-six years; and I'm not sorry yet!" quoth the aunt.

Young Meg looked at her with affectionate eyes and a little tilt of her obstinate chin. Her smile was wise and kind, as though she and not Auntie Meg were the middle-aged matron.

"You dear!" she cried. "You and Uncle Dave are the two nicest, happiest, *youngest* people I know! I'm thankful you exist. I couldn't bear it if you weren't married and still absurdly in love with each other."

She descended from her perch, and hugged Auntie Meg with enthusiasm.

When she was back on the rail, Auntie Meg said again:

"But I asked why you aren't married, not whether you approve of my choice of a husband twenty-six years ago."

Young Meg looked out across the hilltops. Near the placid little lake beneath them a green fir tree had been metamorphosed utterly by the splendid

scarlet of a vigorous Virginia creeper, winding in and out, round and round, so that tree and vine seemed some magical and wonderful flower of the tropics here among the placid Jersey hills.

The bungalow itself was in complete harmony with the woods around it. Inside a hickory fire spluttered on the wide hearth, yet the sun shone on the veranda so that the two women in cotton frocks and white wool sweaters were warm, yet tingling with the bracing air of early autumn. Indeed, as she talked, young Meg flung off her jacket, and threw it across the porch to a rattan couch under the windows. Her pose, nonchalant, indifferent, altered suddenly. She sat very straight, the tan in her smooth cheeks warmed to crimson.

"Auntie Meg, I'll tell you why I haven't married," she said. "And I'll tell you some relevant details."

She took an armchair, thereby indicating that she was possessed by a more than ordinarily serious mood.

"I'm twenty-nine, I have been out of college six years, and in that time I have earned eight thousand dollars beside my own little income. I have been perfectly free, and had an amazingly good time. And, as you know, I have seen something of men."

"You certainly have some man tagging at your heels all the time," said her aunt, not without a note of pride in her voice. "You are considered a very popular young person, Meg, dear."

The girl laughed.

"Sure I'm popular, auntie. I can



"Why don't you get married?" said Auntie Meg.

sing a bit, dance a bit, amuse people one way or another. I have enough money to seem 'prosperous,' and I'm absurdly healthy. But this is aside from the issue—my popularity. After all, just one grown-up man has asked me to marry him; and he was bald, dull, not even well off, and for all his assumption of being just my age I happened to know that he is old enough to be a perfectly correct daddy to your niece!"

Mrs. Merriam stared at the girl incredulously.

"You mean to tell me that the men who hang around you are friends, and not lovers?"

Meg nodded.

"Exactly that. Attention without intention, without responsibility. A lot of men playing around, taking me out, doing things for me, and at the same time carefully refraining from uttering that ancient but essential formula: 'Will you marry me?'"

Mrs. Merriam stared incredulously.

"My dear, I simply cannot believe it—twenty-nine and one proposal!"

The girl, bright eyes fixed on a chattering red squirrel who sat in a near-by tree, nodded gravely, with a sort of impersonal regret in her manner.

"Fact, though—the unalloyed truth—

if I except one other affair which I had at college when I was nineteen. He was twenty, impecunious, minister's seventh son, working his way through college. He asked me to marry him, at a hop, at the end of my freshman year. He assured me that I was the only girl for him, that I would have to marry him, just as soon as he could get a job. I liked him a lot; but he looked so funny and kiddish, with his yellow football curls and his pink cheeks, that I laughed—and he never forgave me!"

She paused with a little reminiscent sigh.

"He was a dear boy. Somewhere I suppose he is now a fine man—very possibly successful. But he and Might-Be-Dad are all who actually spoke the fatal words, whatever some of the others may have thought."

"That is it, of course," said the matron, with an eagerness which was almost pathetic. "They have cared for you, wanted to speak; and you have held them off, showed that you were for them unattainable. My dear, no woman is ever happily married who does not help on her own love affairs, if only by a subtle sympathy with the man's viewpoint, a something which makes him feel that while he cannot be sure yet the girl is *possible*."

Young Meg stared into the treetops with inscrutable, half-shut eyes.

"Do you believe it, auntie, that David, the legal light, *needed* any encouragement, any assistance, when he asked you the question of questions? Because I don't. He was in love with you, and

he would have told you so—after he really got in deep—whatever you did or said. And he's in love with you right now. We've been here a week, and you have had six letters from him, and there's still to-night's mail."

Mrs. Merriam did not laugh or blush. She looked puzzled, almost distressed. Her rosy face with its deep laughter lines became suddenly introspective, analytical. She seemed to see the girl for the first time.

"You are charming, my dear, your very indifference and independence are advantages, the fact that you do not hanker after marriage—or need it—as so many girls of the old school do. The situation seems to me incredible, abnormal."

"It's abnormal, all right," said Meg, "but it exists. And even though I'm rather a happy person, I have thought about it quite a lot. After all, even when a girl has no particular desire to marry,

she prefers to have matrimonial opportunities. There's Pinky Raines, you've heard about him. He is an architect, my age, perhaps he's thirty now, and he has taken me to the theater occasionally, he calls once or twice a week, he writes to me when we're apart. But he told me that last year he cleared just thirteen hundred dollars. Now, you can see, Auntie Meg, that it would be absurd for a man making thirteen hundred a year to propose to a girl who spends a good bit over two thousand."

Mrs. Merriam was looking at her niece shrewdly.



"And he was bald, dull, not even well off."

"If you cared for Pinky Raines, my dear, you would suppose that his earning power is likely to increase. Instead of which you probably rub in the fact that you make more than he does. I don't wonder he steers clear of sentiment—he'd better! But how about Will Dana? He is attractive, well bred, he has money, and I myself have seen him beau you at a dinner as though you were the only woman in the room!"

Meg laughed.

"Will Dana wouldn't look at me for a moment, Auntie Meg, seriously. He has money, and he means to marry money, or, at any rate, beauty, social distinction, something to match definitely what he gives. He wants a wife with a background; and there are a lot of men like him. In his eyes I'm not a successful professional woman, independent, enviable, but an orphan with a pittance, without prestige, and, moreover, a 'girl who works for her living.' I live in a cheap flat with another woman—if my grandfather was a Van Rensselaer; and my housemate teaches school, and is no more important than I am. If you had not introduced Will Dana, if I did not occasionally meet him at your house, he would leave me beautifully alone. As it is, I entertain him. He comes to see me when he's bored, talks about himself, tells me his troubles, asks my advice about his love affairs—if one can call his flirtations by so serious a name. In short, he regards me as an excellent safety valve. For all his snobbishness, he's a pretty good sort, and often the girls in his own set bore him, and he doesn't care for women of another type, the ragged-edge-of-decency society flirt. I seem to him at once safe, sane, and amusing. That's exactly all!"

Her aunt flushed, her soft brown eyes snapped.

"If you are right, Will is a horrid little cad, and I wish I had not gone to school with his mother, and held him on my knee when he wore bibs. But there's that nice man I met at your apartment last Christmas—Dallas, Dalin—what was his name?"

Niece May changed color unexpect-

edly, then laughed quizzically, wholeheartedly as she felt her hot cheeks.

"You mean Ted Dallam—he's the nicest man in the bunch, and the only one I ever proposed to."

Mrs. Merriam gave a little shriek.

"Proposed to! Margaret Ellen Page, you proposed to Mr. Dallam!"

"I did that awful deed," said the girl, but for all her effrontery her cheeks grew pinker and pinker.

"You see, auntie, darling, I've been considering my case all this last year. Thirty is a horrible age—and to be twenty-nine makes any unmarried, unengaged, yet sentimental female feel shuddery, and lonesome, and scared of the manless, awful dog-and-canary future!"

"Ted Dallam is my oldest friend—the one man I still go with whom I have known always, since we both played prisoners' base, and lived on roller skates, and went down to Virginia to spend our summers with Cousin Kate Carter, who was his cousin, too. Well, I like Ted; I respect him; he is a lawyer, thirty-one years old, and ever since his father died he has helped to support his two sisters, one of whom got married this year. So one night last winter I decided that Ted would be a good man for me to marry—all the other possibilities being either too old or too starving poor or too something—and besides I really thought that Ted loved me a little."

She paused a moment; Mrs. Merriam was sitting in a huddled-up fashion, breathlessly waiting the dénouement of this unmaidenly adventure, for, after all, Auntie Meg had about her rudiments of antique propriety.

Meg went on soberly:

"The reason I thought he cared was this. Long ago he made two little rings out of dimes, and we both wore them surreptitiously. I was a romantic baby of fourteen, and he was sixteen—and at the time we were absolutely serious. It was to be a symbol of eternal friendship, no silly love-making, you understand, but those rings stood for loyalty, comradeship; we were to be forever after in the language of the sentimental

teens 'chums.' Well, of course, all that was in the beginning of time. I had lost my ring, forgotten about it, for years. And then one day in March of this year Ted and I went out to Van Cortlandt Park, and played tennis together, and afterward we walked home in the dusk."

She spoke more slowly, a faint, remembering smile curling the corners of her mouth.

"As we walked, I noticed for the first time some trinkets on his watch fob,

supporting those too passive sisters; he made a living by teaching at night even while he was studying at law school. It made me mad—the way he had always slaved for other people with barely a thank you. He is simple, and strong, and kind; and besides a great many little things combined to convince me that he loved me.

"So one night I got tired of 'playing lady,' and I said to him: 'If that ring on your watch chain means anything



"If that ring on your watch chain means anything to you, I should like you to keep it always."

and when he stumbled and dropped his watch on the grass I picked it up and gave it back to him. That little old dime ring of mine was on the chain, and I laughed as I saw it, and expected him to laugh, too, and show it to me. But he merely turned the color of his hair, you may recall that it's bright red, and tucked watch and all in his pocket without a word.

"After that I thought more of him than of other men. I found out that despite his apparent success in the law game he was still in debt, as a result of

to you, I should like you to keep it always—and the giver, too, if you like. But if it doesn't I want it back!"

Mrs. Merriam gasped.

"What did he say?"

"He looked at me, and turned red, as he had done before, a beautiful but painful tomato tint. Then he deliberately took off the ring, and handed it to me.

"'I've had it ever since I was a boy,' he said. 'It has been a talisman, a bit of pure romance all these years. But I feel that I have passed through the

medieval period of first youth into the modern era of common sense; and you yourself have helped in this evolution. As a modern woman, I know that you want many things which you can give yourself, and which I could not give you for years. The thing for you to do is to marry a man who has what you need, what you feel you cannot do without—and I am not that man."

"Auntie Meg, I never said one word—and he went away. I have neither seen nor heard from him since!"

Her aunt sat stone still, and the girl watched the now scampering squirrel with a queer little quiver of her chin and a very firm mouth. Then Mrs. Merriam said slowly:

"I suppose the young professional man of to-day is in a hard position as regards the modern girl. When I married Dave, I hadn't a penny beside the dress allowance father gave me, and I had never made a dollar in my life. But if I had possessed ten million, or written the fashionable novel of the year, or taken a dozen degrees, I should have married him just the same."

The girl opened the fingers of her long, slim hands with a gesture of impatient questioning.

"Who knows? For Uncle Dave might have made a virtue of keeping away, and thereby never giving you the chance. And then, again, it is one thing for a man to marry a rich woman or a successful woman, when marriage does not necessarily interfere with her success, and quite another to marry a trained, self-supporting woman, and by that act deprive her of an income as large or larger than that which he can offer for the support of both."

Mrs. Merriam surveyed her niece thoughtfully.

"Well, my dear, you certainly don't seem unhappy as a result of this state of things. And if you really did propose, you left your young man to infer that he was quite right, that you couldn't be happy on the indicated bread and cheese and kisses."

"I don't care what he 'inferred,'" said the girl, her eyes burning, "and I'm not at all sure that he was right. But I made just one stab at reversing my rôle—and I'll never do it again for any mortal man! Hereafter if a man cares for me, wishes to marry me, he has got to do his own courting, even if in so doing he offers me the 'career' of a scrubwoman. Even a pauper should be man enough to act the man's part, and I wish I'd never seen that horrid ten-cent ring, let alone spoken of it."

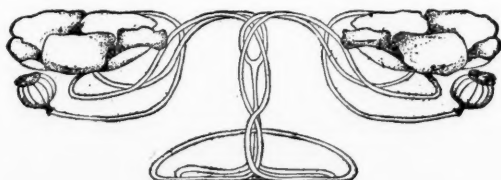
She made a vicious dig with the toe of her slipper, and then she covered her hot face with her hands.

"I may seem to you content, Auntie Meg, spoiled, indifferent. And certainly life is immensely fascinating, I care for my work, and my friends, and an increasing number of other interests. But sometimes I wake up in the night on fire with shame. To propose to a conceited, self-sufficient male thing, and get turned down! It's worse than getting on a street car and finding you've forgotten your pocketbook, and having a strange man offer to pay your fare to the sneering conductor."

Auntie Meg kissed her, laughing a little.

"My dear, whether he's rich or poor, the man who finally wins you will be fortunate and happy—and brave."

"I wonder," said the girl, "I wonder whether there is any man for me. After all, there are thousands of us, of my kind of girl!"



A LOVER OF THE SEA

by
GRACE
MARGARET
GALLAHER

Author of "The Understanding Heart," "The Singing Hand," "The Holiday," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBT. A. GRAEF



ORA MARSH had never been in a boat. And that was strange enough, because she was a Pettipaug girl. We in Pettipaug are an island race, salt stiffens our blood, "the wind that tramps the world" moves in our gestures, and the seven seas sound their beat in our voices. The sea has been the rough cradle of some of us, the wide and lonely grave of others of us. In a sense other than that usual in the reading of the proverb, from youth to old age, we made ducks and drakes of our fortunes.

Old Cap'n Daniel Harding, Ora's maternal grandfather, was lost off Singapore in the China seas in the days when the *Constitution* was still a ship in our navy, and her mother, then little Lydia Harding, could never again hear the waves moan around the rocks without a shiver. When that same little Lydia Harding had become the blooming matron, Mrs. Cap'n Nehemiah Marsh, with a huddle of children about her, the *Lydia M.* had been hove down off Point Judith, and Cap'n Nehemiah washed ashore the next day.

Then Ora's mother set her face against the sea and all its works, even such as Mud River and Mill Pond. No drop of water should claim farther toll of a drop of her blood. To that end, she forbade, under pains and penalties dire to youthful hearts, all commerce between her six children and the river that ran past her very door. Her New England memory held no mysterious lore of water kelpies, mermaids, and Loreleis

beguiling sailors to their cold and sunless caverns; but, as far as in her lay, she stored the seas with slimy growths that suck the veins of men, and monstrous fish that fatten on their bodies.

Her sons, of course, "played hooky" from school, and learned to swim off Flat Rock—if every boy minded his mother, no boy would ever know how to swim—and when they grew to man's estate took an occasional sail to the Sound. They were sober fellows, however, much bound up in their plowing, and "simply messing about in boats" seemed "a shaller" course of manhood. As for the girls, they feared the smooth disk of the pond or the crested breakers of the ocean as much as did their mother, and shook and gasped whenever a river sloop heeled to a quicker gust.

All but Ora. This youngest and smallest of Cap'n "Neme's" children feared nothing. The gloom under the yews of the village graveyard, the blackness of the barn cellar, the rats that galloped about the loft, the white-hot wire of the lightning athwart the summer sky, the sullen old hound at the cross-roads, these and all other country perils never flicked a nerve of her. Even the Day of Judgment, as painted by Elder Carde, failed to thrill her calm. It would be awful, of course, when she should have "to call on the rocks and hills to hide" her, but she couldn't seem to be frightened about it. The Marshes were all a steady, wholesome race, taking comfort in their good home, and enjoying their rare festivities with

sobriety. Yet even among them Ora showed as a little nun, gentle, sweet, and grave, a slender creature, with pretty, bright hair curling away from her face, and eyes as soft as a deer's.

"Clever as a kitten, Ora Marsh is," said her mates, but certain old men who had sailed with Cap'n Daniel Harding in long-gone days laughed slyly as they answered: "She's th' very spit o' ol' Cap'n Danny."

All the time under her meek, maid manners, Ora bore a sailor's heart. She loved the sea with an intensity like the clinging to life itself. The blood of all the old sea dogs of her race since Franky Drake seemed in her concentrated into a briny essence. She was what the Scotch call *fey* for the water. Her castles in Spain were all tall galleons that sailed the shining seas forever; her dreams were all of "a wet sheet, and a flowing sail, and a wind that follows fast." Each morning when she looked out of the little peaked window of her bedroom upon the river beneath, a cry of welcome, keen as that shouted by the Greeks at Trapezus, swelled in her bosom.

Her cherished childhood friends were the ancient mariners smoking their pipes on the wharves that put out here and there without avowed purpose along the Connecticut, and telling their tales to even as simple a listener as the little girl. From them she learned to be weatherwise and craftwise, and to sail in the back pools small barks, whittled from shingles, and outfitted with dolls' gear. She knew every face the beautiful, fickle river can wear, and adored them all. Whether it lay smoking like a burning glass on an August noon, every bush and flower of the bank painted on its silken texture, or danced, dressed in little ripples of heavenly blue, on a spring morning, or beat against the rocks, cold and dark under the winter moon, she believed it kind and friendly to her. If she should slip over the rocks into its depths, it would be only to find herself in a tenderer, more entrancing air.

Not even she herself realized how she longed, year after year, just *once*

to put off in a little boat, and feel the swell of the tide lift her, drop her, lift her, and hear—that sweetest sound to the sailor—the whisper of the water under the bow.

Yet Ora had never even stepped into one of the flatirons moored at the wharf, for she was a good little girl to whom her mother's gloomy warnings and her brothers' stern commands were as Moses and the prophets.

Then on a day in late September she was twenty years old. The greatness of this impressed none of the family; they cuffed her for luck, then kissed her, gave her certainly homely gifts, and forgot all about it. But to Ora herself it was a day immeasurably significant, although it was not yet manifest of what; only she knew she was a girl no more, but a woman, with her destiny upon her.

After dinner she slipped away along the edge of the river. The day was bewitching with the last charm of summer, "the slowly fading mistress of the world." All the valley of the Connecticut simmered in a haze of amber, clouded here and there with the rose or orange reflections of the trees burning to their death upon the banks. The sedges of the coves were molten gold, the sky and river turquoise dappled with white. The air was as warm as summer, with all its fierceness mellowed by an exquisitely soft wind. The silence was like a held breath.

She sought a certain erstwhile deep-sea sailor, now fisherman and clam peddler, Uncle Joey Bogue, who lived in the river, one might say, as his cabin was built up on piles, in the shallows out of sight of her own house. The absence of Uncle Joey's sloop from his rotting wharf showed him to be on the Sound. She sat down on the wharf, swinging her feet close over the water, where shoals of minnows darted in and out, and her eyes rested upon Uncle Joey's other vehicle, a small, flat-bottomed, center-boarded catboat. It bore the dignified name of the *Isaac Webb*, after the owner's last captain, and it was both dirty and leaky. Ora knew it for a true Pettipaug craft, dull and lumpish to-

ward a stranger, but in the hands of an "able man" capable of wonders of speed and endurance.

Suddenly, like the rush of a tide wave up an inland creek, the longing to sail poured through the currents of Ora's blood. Old sea walls of obedience and duty were swallowed up in it. Without reason, without thought, she leaped into the *Isaac Webb*, shook out her sail, weighed her anchor, and steered for the open river.

At first the boat lagged sleepily, the sail flapped in her hand, the water slipped silently from under her. Then, as she freed herself from the blanketing trees, her craft started forward with a little, pretty spring, the sheet pulled out a bit, and the ripples began to murmur the secrets of the seas to her. She steered upstream, because the shining northern reaches of the river called her, and because she could run before a fair wind.

She trembled so the tiller shook in her hand, and something her calm days could not tell her was exultation leaped and sang within her. She felt a creature all air and light, newborn of foam and sun. When she glanced back at the shore, she half thought to see her abandoned self, a prim, contained little person, standing on the bank. She sang in a voice as slender and sweet as a bird's pipe, and the songs were "Blow the Man Down" and other deep-sea chanties.

"If the folks find this out, they'll never get over it," she told herself, and cared not at all.

Nothing that had ever happened of ill in her journey through the world was of the smallest concern to her now; the cake she had burned that morning; the tiff with her mate, Pamela Robb; the impish small boys in her Sabbath-school class, she was sailing away from them all, "hull down on the trail of rapture."

Slipped on the thread of her joy, the jewel miles dropped behind her, Ely's, Joshua's Rocks, Brockway's Landing, Shirley Cove, names on the map only to her before, were all down river now. Middleton, Canada, Hudson's Bay, where should her new world lie?

"My soul"—she seemed to wake from a trance—"if I'd knowed it was like this, I'd run away to sea when I was ten!"

She sank down on the seat, realizing suddenly that she had been standing for hours, and that "man's airy nothings mix with clay." She held her fingers edgewise against the sun, Indian fashion, to catch the time.

"I cal'late I'd better 'bout ship, I got to beat back."

She gave a long sigh that the perfect hour must end. Without a tremor for the intricacies of tacking, she brought the *Isaac Webb* about with a speed that the real Isaac in his boldest moments would not have ventured.

"Took in a cupful of water, then," she remarked gayly, shaking her skirts out of the spray. "Uncle Joey says any fool can run before th' wind, but it takes a man to beat."

She stowed her hat in the cuddy, loosened her dress at the throat, and rolled up her sleeves, for beating seemed like baking bread, you didn't want your clothes to hamper you. The springing wind blew a deep rose color into her cheeks, and fluttered the curls like little flags about her face. Spray, light as a touch, but salt to the taste, tinkled up in her face. Her eyes shone, little dimples skipped in and out around her mouth.

"Now!"

Like the voice of some one else giving an order, the sailor instinct commanded when to come about. She had watched the boatmen do it a thousand times, she had heard Uncle Joey's explanation of theory and direction; she knew just how it should be done, yet, instead of that swift, exact accord of wind and sail, there were a jar and grind, a tangle of sail and sheet, a slack moment of vacillation, and then a lunge in the new direction.

"Forever!" cried Ora, unconscious she had just escaped gybing over. "I hope th' menfolks didn't see that!"

The river was empty of sails, however; the shore of houses.

"Now I'm on my long leg," she said nautically, and looked about her.



He leaped, landing in the middle of the boat adroitly.

"Why!" for the tide and the wind, in the article of tacking, had driven her into one of the many coves that lurk behind the small islands of the river. The girl measured the narrow slit of water between island and bank in disgust.

"If I got to sheer back an' forth in this pocket, I might as well run a ferry."

"The old farrago!" The tiller leaped from her hand as she jumped with excitement.

Something crashed through the thick underbrush, and rolled down to the river. Instantly it leaped up into the figure of a man, a gun in his extended hand.

had no place for resentment at the criticism.

"You hurt you?" she asked again gently.

"Le's see if my gun's all there," was his way of answering. "Here!" He pushed the tiller at her. "Got a rag o' some sort? This'll do." He pulled one out of the cuddy, and wiped his gun carefully, rubbing his hands dry before he threw the cloth overboard.

"Your hand's a-bleedin'." Ora's soft voice was solicitous.

The man laughed again. "I scratched it on th' bushes; I'll forget it 'fore Christmas."

He turned coolly around, and gave

"You hurt?" called Ora, with shrill sweetness.

The man imperiously beckoned her to sail near. Bewilderingly obedient, she steered for the rocks. As she sheered in close, he leaped the intervening water space, landing in the middle of the boat adroitly. Without a glance at her, he laid his gun down under the gunwale, caught the tiller out of her hands, and brought the boat about with a skill that made the girl blush for her own clumsy tactics.

"You don't know this cove or you'd never 'a' sheered in so close to them rocks. You'd 'a' stove her in next minute." The stranger said this with a cheerful smile.

That he should speak as one sailor to another filled Ora with a pride that

her a long stare. Ora gazed back as steadily. For a time that counted like minutes, they sailed in silence. Then the stranger uttered his quick, deep laugh, and Ora laughed, too, because it seemed impossible not to when he did.

The man was young, not much older than she herself, tall, slim, and limber. He had tough, black hair, a deeply sunburned face, and the oddest eyes, which, shaded by thick, dark lashes, she thought black till, peering at them, she found them as blue as a baby's. Sometimes they flashed with humor, then softened sorrowfully for a thought she could not follow. If she tried to look down into them, she could not, for some baffling quality they owned. When the stranger laughed or turned on her his mysterious eyes, she felt she had known him always, and this queer sail was only one of scores they had taken together.

Ora was moved deeply by the encounter. This was what happened when one went down to the sea in ships, and did business upon great waters. Twenty placid years had she spent ashore with not one unheralded event to stir them; her first day afloat brought such adventures.

"Was you expectin' to find a bo't here?" she asked, to end the silence. She felt him at an advantage, as if behind blinds, and she in the open.

"Lucky for me you come 'long, eh?" he evaded.

"Where you want to go?" she tried next.

"Wasn't you headed for th' other side when you got slewed in here?" It seemed to be his way to answer one question with another.

Pettipaug is hard to baffle on the trail.

"You came like you was runnin' way from some one. Sheriff after you?" It was an ancient and honorable jest, but it met unexpected response.

"Didn't get me, thanks to you." The boy chuckled.

Ora started from her seat.

"You did somethin' you hadn't ought to? Somethin' wrong?" she trembled out.

He took the tiller as if her movement had been an invitation to that end.

"What you call wrong?" His smile, brilliant, yet soft, seemed actually to touch her; his voice, with its drawling Pettipaug intonations, yet with an alien, mellow note in its cadence, moved her queerly.

"You fought with any one?"

He made no answer, absorbed in bringing the boat out of the cove into the open river. A touch here, a twist there, and they were free. Ora recognized the skilled sailor in this young fellow.

"Up? Down?" He smiled at her.

"Down. I know the way." She reached out for the tiller.

"Got to make time, now; leastwise, I have." He shook his head indulgently, as one denying a child.

"I can sail," jealous for her new-found seamanship.

"I see you can, smart as paint, but we got to buck wind an' tide both, an' I cal'late my arms some ruggedger 'n yours."

He smiled at the sinewy hand on the tiller, and then at Ora's own, tanned and work-hardened, but small and plump.

"Mind smoke? Th' wind 'll carry it other side o' you." He pulled a clay cutty from his pocket.

The girl pinched her fingers in her lap; was she, Ora Amanda Marsh, actually awake or only dreaming on the river bank?

"You wanted to th' water?" she asked, in her innocent pursuit of knowledge. Shy with strangers, she felt as much at home with him as with her brothers.

"Guess I'd be called so," he laughed; "run off to sea when I was twelve. 'Round th' Horn when I was thirteen."

"You enjoy it?" The words were staid, but a tremulous eagerness informed them. What if he did not share her delight?

The stranger smoked reflectively. "Can't live off it," he said at last, with calm decision. "I was born on it—long the Peru coast—an' I've been on it 'bout all th' time last ten years. It's my

place." He said it simply, yet the words touched the chord in her that sang for the sea.

"Oh, yes," she breathed.

"You like it, too, don't you?" He smiled in a way that made him more than ever an old friend.

The girl struggled for words great enough. "I—I—can't tell you how I like it," was all she found.

But he understood and nodded, smiling his gay, kind smile.

Ora was an honest soul.

"But I never was on it till just to-day," she finished.

"When you sail a bo't like that?" His astonishment was the sweetest compliment. "How you make that out?"

Because she must, Ora told him in quick, little breaths the tale of her unslaked thirst for the river, and to-day's deep draft.

"So you run off to sea, same as me."

He laughed till she, too, laughed at the delight of it, at the happiness of a world where such splendid turns of the wheel were possible.

"Good for you! What your folks 'goin' to say, though?"

"I don't know," gayly.

"You don't care, do you?" It was the current phrase of Pettipaug for sympathetic approval, but to-day it had a significance for her alone, as if thus he told her he understood the irresponsible joy that lifted her heart.

"I'm off to sea 'gain, next week. China, one hundred and eighty days, if I have luck. Yes, I got my ship." He answered the eager question in her face as if she had spoken. "Twenty-two year ol' an' master o' th' *Dauntless*. 'Twas my father's name got it for me; he sailed for th' same company, an' stayed by his ship when she went down in th' South Pacific."

"Ain't you proud?" Ora was sweetly shy as she put the question.

"I guess I am! So proud I can't hardly walk on common ground."

Yet it was not vainglory, only happiness that burned in his voice.

"You be good to your men, won't you?" she urged, tales of "bucko" cap-

tains gathered on the wharf running into her memory.

"The men ain't all kittens."

"But some captains——"

"I cal'late I know *them*," he broke in, with sudden fierceness. "I run away to sea with ol' Cap'n Lem Loomis. Ever know *him*? Well, he's dead, and in ——" He broke off: "He's dead. His own hands, they killed him."

His good-humored face had set savagely. Ora saw now that, for all its youth, it was keen and hard, with an underhanging jaw.

"You didn't always have hard times, did you?" pitifully.

"Lordy, no! I sailed six year' with ol' Cap'n Billy West, kindest man ever held a sheet. No, th' sea's used me well, mostly."

He slipped into talk of daring adventures, chiefly not his own, upon strange coasts, and the wonders of the great deep. Ora listened, enthralled; it was the theme beloved of her, and from his lips, enchanting. There were likely, up-and-coming boys in Pettipaug, sailors themselves, but none had the swing of this lad, who had caught in his voice and laugh the very smack of the sea itself, and who held his life a joyous venture.

"I got that to keep me warm on my voyage." He thrust his hand suddenly into his pocket, and brought forth a huge roll of bills. "A thousand an' odd dollars." He slapped it with his fist heartily, then crowded it back again.

His words about the sheriff pricked Ora's memory.

"You come by it right?" she whispered, her little, innocent face turned up to his.

"It's mine, if that's your meanin'," he answered coolly, "an' a good few dollars more I'll never set finger on."

"What made you run for it, then?" still anxiously.

The other smiled down at her in amused kindness:

"Well, th' old man—him I took it from—he's pretty spry with his temper; when he finds out this little wad's gone, I reckon he'll raise ol' Tobe for a spell. I heard him a-comin', an' I didn't want

no fracas, for all he's old he's powerful strong yet, an' I'd 'a' had to fight him, an' I didn't want to hurt him; just get my rights. So lit out fast as I could clip it without ever stoppin' to set down my gun I'd been squirrel huntin' with. I'm a-goin' over to New London to see 'bout my ship, an' salt down these pieces o' th' paper in th' bank, then I'll come home 'gain, an' bid him good-by civil an' proper when his dander's ca'med down."

It seemed very dark to her.

"Why don't you ask him for it, out an' out?" she urged.

"Did. No, sir, faced me down 'twarn't mine. Then he drew it out o' th' bank 'cause he thought th' ol' concern was shaky. Oh, ho!" he laughed derisively.

Then his voice softened, his eyes grew gentle.

"Say"—he bent toward her—"you don't think I *stole* it, do you? It's all mine, every cent; he hadn't a ghost o' a claim to it. You believe me, don't you?" His tone pleaded a little. "You think I'm all square an' honest?"

Ora's heart beat quick and little.

"I believe you," she said, her candid eyes steady on his.

"That's you!" cried the man joyfully. "Now, let's see where we can make us a landin'."

"There's my wharf."

"Pettipaug? Ain't there a back road somewheres here leads out to th' stage route to New London?"

As Ora stood up to point, the boat lurched suddenly, and she swayed perilously. The man steadied her with a powerful hand, holding her arm. He ran the boat into Uncle Joey's dock handily, moored there; then, as coolly as if she were a child, lifted his passenger out. For a moment they looked at each other, she up and he down, then he said earnestly:

"It's all right 'bout believin' me? You do, don't you?"

Ora drew in her breath.

"I do believe you." And this time the words had the solemnity of a vow, sealed by the faith of her honest eyes.

"Thank you for th' voyage down."

He caught her hand as if he were going to swing it in the air as in a child's game; instead, he kissed it lightly, like the touch of a little wind and, laughing, was gone.

Ora stood on the wharf in the glimmering twilight, and blushed till her cheeks were a scorching fire; then she trembled a little, and then she laughed, and her laugh was an echo of the stranger's, gay, impersonal, a tribute to the joy of things.

Through the door of the Marsh kitchen warm scents of cooking supper greeted the voyager—fried ham and batter cakes on the griddle. In the glow from an open stove hole, Ora could see her mother, a large, comfortable figure of a woman in a mobcap, capably engaged with a pan of baked apples steaming from the oven. Her brothers and sisters were stepping about the room, each on some lawful occasion connected with supper.

It seemed to Ora that a world in which you could sally forth in the glowing noon to enchanting enterprises upon deep waters, and in which, when weary, you could come home to supper and mother, left little to be desired. She took her seat at the table with new lights, like beacons at sea, dancing in her meek eyes.

The next morning the sun shone with a wintry pallor, and a wind bit from the northeast. All the Marshes were sharp set to garner into barns their late vegetables and fruit away from the menacing frost. They all fell a-harvesting the apples in the orchard. There Uncle Joey Bogue found them, in the trees and under them, when he came over with his dish of gossip. The ancient fisherman was the village newspaper, for he fished from Joshua's Rocks to Saybrook Point, and peddled his catch from Pettipaug to Candlelight Hill, capturing odds and bits of news from every rock and bush.

"The world is very evil,

The times is waxin' late.

Be sober an' keep vigil,

The judge is at th' gate."

He announced this in his cracked voice. Once he had sung in the seats, an awesome bass, and was wonted to

offer as a prologue to his items a snatch from some ancient hymn.

"Ain't what it was when you was young, eh, Uncle Joey?" called Nehemiah Marsh from an apple tree.

"You're in th' right on it, my son. I donno as Judgment Day'll be deferred much longer th' way folks is carryin' on."

The old man sat down on a wheelbarrow, and began to munch an apple quite cheerfully in spite of a lost world.

"Well, now, Joey," combated Mrs. Marsh genially, "there's a consid'ble few good folks left yet."

"What you say to an ol' man nigh on eighty murdered by his own nephew?" retorted Uncle Joey triumphantly.

"Israel in Egypt!"

Mrs. Marsh dropped her apron of apples; Rebecca, who was delicate, turned pale and gasped. All the others spoke at once. Ora felt a jar go through her whole body.

"I was a-comin' through Lyme Bridge at sunup this mornin' when I glimpsed Job Doane puttin' off th' east bank; he'd been a-harvestin' over to Grassy Hill."

It was the narrator's exasperating method to plump the great fact out at his audience, then weave himself tortuously back to the details. Nehemiah made the motion behind his back of hurling an apple at him.

"Seventy-six year' old he was, an' deacon to th' church, lone in his house, an' nothin' you might call a weapon in his hand."

"Whose hand?" cried the youthful Jonas Marsh.

"I knowed his brother Marden well; went to sea long o' him when he was master o' th' *Nora Regan*, named arter his wife; it was he set by her mor'n most. She was aboard, too, jest wedded they was. Cap'n Marny must a been a good twenty year' younger 'n his brother."

Having shown his audience their proper place, the bringer of tidings proceeded to give out his tale in good, set terms.

"When Cap'n Marny Darset died—

drownded in th' South Seas—he left a pile o' money an' th' whole o' his great farm to his brother Josiah in trust, ev'ry cent o' it, to be spent for his wife an' son till th' boy was twenty-one. Cap'n Marny had wedded a girl from foreign parts, out o' th' west coast o' Ireland she was, pretty in th' face as I ever see, an' pretty actin', too, kind o' sprig an' jaunty in her manner, you might say."

Through the mind of one listener flashed a memory of another sprig and jaunty manner; it was his Irish mother that had spoken in the young man's liquid voice, and laughed from his shadowy eyes.

"Nora Darset died long o' th' same year Cap'n Marny did, an' th' boy, Marny, like his dad, was left to th' ministrations o' ol' 'Siah. Well, I guess 'twas kind o' head winds an' head tide for th' young one. 'Siah used to raise th' ol' Hewdie when he got riled. Anyhow, he run off to sea when he warn't mor'n knee high. Didn't nobody over to Grassy Hill see hair nor hide o' him from then on, an' th' word got 'bout he was drownded. So ol' 'Siah he carried on affairs 'cordin' as he was a mind to. Well, sirs, last month what does that young Marny chap do but turn up over to Grassy Hill, says he's twenty-two year' ol', captain o' his own bark, an'll thank Uncle 'Siah to hand over th' farm an' th' money he's been usin' so antic these dozen years."

"Well," said Nehemiah, with consideration, "that warn't more'n nature."

"I believe ye. But ol' 'Siah was put off his head by it. Seems he'd figger'd it out th' boy warn't never goin' to show a hand this side Day o' Judgment. You see he'd spec'lated an' like that, an' th' money was 'bout all gone."

"Did this Darset threaten to sue?" asked Jonas, whose mind had a legal cast.

"Didn't get no chanct. 'Siah takes th' line there never was no money. Seems th' judge, an' th' witnesses to th' will, an' like that, who'd been concerned in Cap'n Marny's affairs was dead. 'Siah he brazens it out how there never had been none, an' warn't none now. An'



"I believe you are innocent."

things was that tarnation snarled up owin' to 'Siah's ways o' business not th' cutest lawyer among 'em could get aholt o' th' end o' 'em."

"Forever!" ejaculated Mrs. Marsh, in horror. "There's folks in Christian lands that'd disgrace th' dumb heathen."

"But 'Siah couldn't pull th' wool over his nephew's eyes, if he warn't all Yankee. He'd heard his father an' mother talk, an' he ain't forgot. My suz! I guess there was a go 'round mor'n one day 'bout that money, from th' neighbors' tell."

Uncle Joey grinned as he conjured up the battles of old 'Siah and the young sailor. Then he sobered to the tragic end.

"Yesterday, unbeknownst to his nephew, as he deemed it, 'Siah drew out a thousand dollars odd from Grassy Hill Bank to invest it in Saybrook next day. Young Darset did know it, though, for he told Dan Starkey's boy George 'bout it, him that used to live in these parts an' moved to Grassy Hill. The last folks see o' 'Siah 'live he was a-goin' toward th' house from his potato

field. That was consid'ble late yesterday afternoon. 'Bout dusk one o' th' neighbors went up to borrow some trade or other. Right on th' kitchen floor he like to walked spang onto th' ol' man lyin' in a pool o' blood, his head all battered up with some kind o' a blunt tool, ax head, maybe, or gun butt."

A queer sound escaped Ora. She remembered with what care the stranger had wiped his gun.

"Where's his nephew?" Different voices urged on the story.

"I believe ye. He's lit out, his gun's lit out, an' th' thousand dollars lit out, too."

"Ain't they got a trail o' him?" queried Nehemiah sternly. He was already a selectman, and civic duties pressed upon him.

"Sheriff he's kind o' baffled, for a girl see Marny a-runnin' toward th' river 'bout th' time it was done, an' yet they ain't a bo't gone for miles up an' down. He'll be ketched, though, for sheriff, he's a-put notices up in all th' town's picturin' th' fellow all out an'

offerin' a swingein' reward. Kind o' hard, when 'Siah used him so mean."

"He murdered an' ol' man!"

"An' his uncle!"

"He could o' got his money by law, if he'd 'a' been willin' to wait."

They poured out horror and condemnation upon the fleeing murderer.

"I won't get a night's sleep till I hear such a desperate character's in jail," was Mrs. Marsh's decision.

"You girls keep to th' farm, you don't know where he may be a-hidin'," admonished Nehemiah, as the head of the family, "an' you, Ora, you quit stealin' 'long th' river like you do; that's th' likeliest spot for him to have as a bangein' place."

It was the fashion of the household to admonish Ora as a child, and she never resented it. She nodded now at Nehemiah, since all her speech was blown away from her, and, unnoticed in the discussion, stole away. She sat down on the strip of shingle in front of the farm, and gazed out at the river, as blue as ice and as cold in the frosty air. What a horrible coil wound him and her! How mysterious was the world when such dark webs could ensnare a man! She shook with terror at the crime, with pity for the old man she had never seen.

"But he'll be able to make 'em see he's innocent," she said steadily and quietly, looking out across the river. "He said it was all right. I believe him. He never did that cruel thing."

The tumult within her quieted. Something strong, and sweet, and abiding glowed in her heart, a spark at first, slowly burning to a great light.

"He's innocent." She spoke the words aloud in a low, steadfast voice. "I know he's innocent. I believe he'll be put right before folks."

It was like a saint making her confession of faith, a credo too deep for fear, too high for passion. She was a treasured young girl, innocent in mind, child-like in heart, with no experience of hardness endured to fortify her, yet as she sat by the river, touched by the keen autumn air, she looked like her grandfather, Cap'n Dan, when he went down

with his ship; as if she, too, could stand to her trust without crying and without flinching.

She walked back to the orchard swiftly, yet quietly. They were talking still about the crime and the chances of escape for the fugitive. She went close to Uncle Joey.

"I don't believe he killed him," she said, her voice calm, but her heart thudding in her breast.

"Eh, what say?" Uncle Joey gasped in amazement.

The others stopped to hear.

"I don't believe Cap'n Darset killed his uncle," she said again, her knees shaking under her.

"What you know 'bout it?" snapped Uncle Joey, not unnaturally, and Nehemiah inquired sarcastically:

"You 'quainted with th' party?"

The bow was shot. She had borne witness; she need say no more.

For four days Ora obediently kept to the boundaries of the farm, delving in her garden, or raking the leaf-strewn paths. Neighborhood comment and speculation eddied round and round the crime at Grassy Hill, but no actual news of victim or murderer reached the Marshes. Telephone, telegraph, the railroad itself, were all undreamed, as yet, in that long-ago Pettipaug; plodding horses or stout human legs carried the news from farm to farm. Each night when Ora went to bed, she knelt by the window, through which came the sound of the river, like the voice of a friend, and prayed, as a Roman to Father Tiber:

"Don't let him be caught. Make folks find out he's innocent."

Each morning she prayed that again, only more confidently, because the water was so hopeful a blue. She never prayed that he might be innocent; she needed no gods to make him that.

The fifth day Nehemiah invited her to drive over to the Corners with him for grain. The tavern for changing horses on the old stage route was at the Corners, a point of contact with the great world beyond the hills.

Nehemiah hitched his horses in the shade across the road from the tavern,

and waited, discussing crops with chance-met acquaintances on the tavern steps, for the event of the day, the stage. Ora walked down the street to view the glory of the Corners' three shops.

The stage lumbered heavily up to the tavern, the horses were taken out, and the passengers for remote hamlets climbed down to the road. Ora, from a distance, saw a young woman and baby disappear into the tavern, an old man walk off up the street, and then three men start quickly toward the store in front of which she stood. At the sound of the stage, a man hurried out of a house, and began to unhitch his horses tied to a post.

"I got your word, George, an' I'm all ready for you," he called, in an intense undertone.

Ora's eyes, long-sighted like her sailor father's, examined the three men carefully. Two of them she recognized, George Prentiss, sheriff of Middlesex County, and the stranger of her one voyage, Cap'n Marden Darset. The sailor had an ugly cut over his eyes, his clothes were thick with dust, and his wrists were ironed together in handcuffs.

"They've caught him over to New London," breathed Ora, and walked toward him.

The minister of the Corners' church, two strange women, and a little girl, the shopkeeper, the owner of the tavern, and a half score of boys were gathering around the sheriff and his prisoner. To Ora they represented Society, the Press, and the Pulpit, all the elements of her world assembled to witness the scene. Without a glance toward them, with the steady quickness very quiet people often show in action, she walked up to the ironed sailor. His face as she saw it close was set and fierce, but not despairing; his blue eyes burned black with anger in their dark arches.

The girl stepped in front of him, and laid her two hands softly on his manacled ones, where the close iron cut into them. The men halted, perforce. The prisoner's eyes fell on her face, very white and strained in its resolution, but sweet and pitiful. His own softened,

and kindled, and suddenly flashed out a spark of that old elixir of life of the river day.

"I know you never did that wicked thing," said Ora, in a clear, gentle voice. "I believe you are innocent. No matter what the judge says, an' no matter what they do to you, I'll never believe you did it."

He answered instantly, his voice trembling so the words could hardly say themselves:

"I never did it—God's my witness!"

"Come on now," said the sheriff mildly, but with decision.

The other man thrust Ora one side with a little push. The prisoner flung her a look, more appealing in its courage than any lament, and she answered it with all the hope and trust of her loyal heart running in a flood over her face.

"Good-by, Cap'n Marny," she said, and her voice dwelt on his name.

After that she walked in outer calmness back to her wagon, climbed in, and waited for Nehemiah to finish his affairs. He had not seen her encounter with the sheriff's party, but he could give her the particulars of the arrest.

"'Bijah Hyatt's th' one found him over to New London," he told her; "he warn't hidin' nor nothin'; acted dreadful curious an' open 'bout it. 'Bije got sheriff over to seize him to-day; they said he put up a fight 'gain 'em both. Sheriff had to draw on him, an' then iron him. Well, I'm kind o' sorry for th' chap; he's young, an' he don't look like he was a reg'lar villain, an' he's been used terr'ble mean by that uncle o' his'n."

Ora folded her hands in her laps; she felt the exhaustion of one who has run a long race.

"Yes," she said.

And Nehemiah, accustomed to her silent habit of companionship, shook his head soberly, and urged on his horses through the miles.

"Hellow, there! Ride?"

At the cheerful shout, Ora's taut nerves jerked like a snapped string, a flying thought of the young sailor overtaken on the road leaped through her



"You goin' in a calico gownd an' a pink tyer?"

blood. It was only Ethan Bradbury trudging along the road with a strap of books on his shoulders.

"Have to bunk in 'mong th' grain sacks," Nehemiah went on, "but I cal'late Dol an' Kit's better 'n shank's mare."

Ethan climbed over the wheel with a smile of agreement. He was a gaunt fellow, with a bleak face and wintry-gray eyes, but his brow had a noble sweep, and the line of his jaw a fine decision. He reached a hand over to Ora, who shook it in a warm silence.

"Just saw sheriff bringin' back that Grassy Hill fellow that murdered his

uncle." Nehemiah began at once on the topic of the week.

"Sho! How'd they get him?"

Ethan was the school-master at the Pettipaug north district; his castle lay off the main-traveled road.

"'Bije Hyatt caught up with him in New London, budge as you please, right out on the wharves. Go in' to brazen it out, I deem it. That'll look kind o' bad for him, won't it?" The school-master was known to be studying law.

Ethan pondered the case briefly.

"No," he

said, and Ora thought unexpectedly what a droning voice he had, "looks t'other way, to my mind; sure of his alibi or no 'casion to hide cause he's innocent."

"Um!" allowed the other, not sure himself of what an alibi might be.

Ora, wholly ignorant, turned the sweetness of her little, intent smile upon the newcomer.

"He is innocent," she said, with soft insistence.

"Ora, here," explained her brother, "never so much as glimpsed the fellow or any o' his kin, but she's set up her Ebenezer he ain't done it."

The frost of Ethan's countenance thawed appreciatively; no one held Ora other than a pretty child, whose innocent vagaries were a count in the sweetness and light of the world; therefore, he lay under no stress to establish a basis for this conviction of hers.

"Well, well," he said mildly, "'twas a terrible business, all o' it. You feel consid'ble smart this fall, Ora?"

The talk wound through safe and homely channels, while the horses thudded toward the farm.

Not years, but experience, ages us. A week may cut lines in the face a decade has not graven there. In a week Ora Marsh had learned the fevered thrill of expectation, the sick droop of disappointment, and the iron patience, which endures because no other course is given it, of those who wait for news that does not come. The little girl who gayly steered her boat for open water belonged to a long-ago day, before ever a stranger with alluring eyes, and a laugh that reached the very heart of joy, had laid a hand upon her life, and bent it inexplicably to his own.

For no word came from Grassy Hill. In her ignorance of the law's delays, Ora shuddered to the conviction that Marny Darset had been tried, and hanged that very night. She strained her eyes across the river, as if she could pierce the hills with her desire. Where was he? What were they doing to him?

"He is nothin' in th' wide world to me," she counseled herself reasonably, then wrung her hands under her apron with the misery of the silence. "I dunno as it's any difference to me if they do hang a man I ain't seen but twice in my whole life, an' shan't ever see 'gain." The voice of wisdom admonished, but her tears came in a salt flood.

"Ora, child, you look as peak'd as a potato sprout," her mother remonstrated one night, as they washed the supper dishes. "I'm a-goin' to brew you up a thorough good bowl o' gentian tea, an' dose you night an' mornin'."

Ora blanched, and the others laughed heartlessly, Mrs. Marsh's brews being of deadly power.

"Been suckin' up ague 'long th' river bank," suggested her sister Rebecca.

Nehemiah drew the slender girl down on the arm of his chair; although the family were averse to "shaller" demonstrations, petting Ora was like playing with the kitten.

"Feel kind o' meachin', eh, sis?"

Ora regarded the plate in her hands reflectively; she was wondering what they all would say if she dashed it on the floor, shrieking:

"I feel like I'd die if I don't hear about Marny Darset."

The door opened to let in Ethan Bradbury, blue-faced and chill from the autumn frost. The schoolmaster was a frequent visitor.

"Now, Ethan, give us a dish o' conversation," urged Mrs. Marsh, as she drew him a hospitable seat by the fire. "There ain't none o' us been down to Pettipaug since Sabbath."

"Just heard some news," Ethan replied readily. "Word's come from Grassy Hill."

Ora flinched where she sat, and prayed for self-command not to cry out.

"Queer how 'tis 'bout it," Ethan ruminated. "That ol' Josiah Darset ain't dead, after all."

"I heard it said over to meetin' he was only kind o' numbed," replied Nehemiah, while Ora wondered how that had escaped her longing ears.

"Consid'ble sick man he is still, I gather, but he's come to, an' sensed th' run o' things, an' told how it was. 'Twarn't his nephew, Marden Darset, at all, that clubbed him. 'Twas a tramp he never set eyes on till that day. Tramp 'd got wet somehow o' th' thousand dollars th' ol' man had drawn out o' th' bank, an' he'd come to get it. Demanded it o' th' ol' fellow, an' when he wouldn't hand it over, hit him a clip with a stick he carried. Josiah, he fought back with a chair, an' th' tramp gave him th' thump that pretty nigh finished his business."

In the chatter of exclamations and questions, Ora sat in unwonted silence. She longed to fly to the river, and kneel before it till her face was in its kind

waters. It had set him free as she had prayed! She caught her breath as she heard Ethan say:

"He's captain o' a big bark sails this week; just been awaitin' to see what was to be done 'bout him."

Then her thoughts sailed away on the big bark, which she christened the *Good Luck*, far out to sea, and she heard not a word Ethan said.

Winter stepped softly by on its white feet. Spring touched the grim land into a marvel of beauty. Summer's splendors dimmed, and gentle autumn again glowed golden on tree and river. Ora went her placid round with the seasons, useful, busy, happy. She kept deep in her memory the afternoon of pure delight, and the echo of a beautiful voice. But poignant remembrance is for the old, and Ora was only twenty. The splendor both of the happiness of that day, and of the misery of that week, the great faith and the great act, were all alike dimmed by the little joys of every day.

Nothing fed memory, for Grassy Hill and Pettipaug were separated by "the salt, estranging sea"—that is, the river; commerce between them was of the slightest, and news the scantiest. Ora heard that the acquitted sailor went at once to his ship; beyond that, of him living or dead, no word ever came. He had gone out of her life completely. Other voices muffled his rich tones, blurred his laughing eyes, for Ora began to be the object of much courting from Pettipaug lads.

Slowly she blossomed out of her shyness like a flower from its sheath, and smiled, albeit still timidly, upon her swains with lovely, serene eyes, and rose-red cheeks. Likely boys from the village or the distant farms "beaued her home from meetin'," took her "carriage ridin'" through Lovers' Lane, and offered her the other attentions proper to the time and country.

Most zealous among them was Ethan Bradbury, whose interest even modest Ora felt to be serious. Pondering his setting in her picture, she was moved by hospitable little drawings toward him. Ethan was a worthy young man,

a present guide to infancy, and a coming light of the bar. She couldn't do better; but let things wait a while longer.

"I'm th' youngest o' mother's children," Ora fenced with herself. "I ain't a-goin' to think 'bout leavin' her for a good spell yet."

Thus the second winter passed, and "spring with dewy fingers cold" returned to deck Pettipaug. Ora felt the first thrill of it run hot through her blood one April morning when she was setting up a quilt on the frame in the shed chamber. The fire had smoked, and she had opened a window for air. A little gypsy wind wandered in at the window; and kissed her cheek. That was all.

The girl jumped up, and leaned out over her garden. Her bodily eyes saw only ranks of bare, frozen shrubs, and the rosebushes covered up in straw. "That inward eye which is the bliss of solitude" glowed with the vision of meadows pied with daisies white and swept by showers of perfumed apple blows.

She set her thimble on the edge of the frame, thrust her needle into the quilt, and faced her fellow quilters bravely.

"I ain't a-goin' to quilt no more this mornin'," she announced, with placid determination.

"Why ain't you, if I may be so bold's to inquired?" Her sister Sarah spoke in the interests of labor.

"I don't know," returned Ora simply, "but if I stay in th' house another minute this day, die I shall!"

"The good laws! What plan o' conduct do you call that?" queried Sarah austere.

But Hetty, next to Ora in age, laughed, as she snapped her thread.

"How many doughnuts was you sayin' last night you fried this winter, nine hundred?" she asked, with great irrelevance.

Ora smiled back as she ran down the steep stairs.

"Where you goin'?" called Sarah after her.

She made no answer, for indeed she did not know. "Over the hills and far

away," was the tune that sang in her blood.

A smart buggy and two horses clattered into the yard. Ethan Bradbury in his Sunday clothes was driving. Ora noted how well they clothed his angular person, and how without technique of any sort was his manner of handling the reins.

"Ethan always 'complishes things with his hands by main strength," she thought shrewdly, as the carriage grazed the well curb.

"Mornin', Miss Marsh; mornin', Jonas; Ora to home?" he called, without alighting. "That you, Ora? I came to see if you'd be pleased to ride over to New London with me this mornin'?" His tone was elaborately casual.

"Good fathers, Ethan!" ejaculated Mrs. Marsh, in robust amazement. "Why don't you invite th' child to go to Boston while you're about it?"

Ethan's large air dwindled slightly.

"'Tain't but eighteen mile there, Mis' Marsh, an' we got a early start an' a moon to come home by. We'll take our dinner to Sister Clelia's. I'll be real careful o' her."

Mrs. Marsh was fluttered perceptibly, for there lurked large significances under this day's jaunt, she knew.

"What's your will over to th' city?" she asked by way of consent. "Ora, child, forever!" She made a clutch at her daughter. "You goin' in a calico gownd an' a pink tyer?"

For the girl, unregarding of all else save the call of wind and sun, had started, all accoutered as she was, for the carriage.

"You dress you in your meetin' blue an' your bonnet Neme brought you from Boston."

It seemed to Ora, sitting enthralled beside Ethan, that never before had she really seen the sun lying warm on brown stubble fields, or the white clouds sailing high over the winding river. The southern wind was like a breath of enchanted air, magicing the common world to mystery and delight. The call to the explorer, "something lost behind the ranges, go and find it," shouted within her. She looked across to Lyme

Hills, and rejoiced that her trail led her over them and beyond. All the summers that had ever budded and flowered along the marge of the ancient river were visioned before her, glowing, wonderful. She sat in a trance of rapture at the coming beauty of the world.

"You familiar with New London?" Ethan thus opened conversation, although he knew perfectly her answer.

"I ain't ever been there." Her voice was hushed to her dream.

"Ain't? Well, it's consid'ble o' a place, an' renowned for shippin'." He waited for her to ask his errand; then, as she did not, he volunteered: "I got important business over there."

"Yes," said Ora vaguely, still seeing the earth bring forth her increase of fruit and flowers.

"I was obligated to discharge it to-day or not at all. I was forced to give my scholars a holiday." He said each word with emphasis to reach her abstraction.

The girl turned her pretty, gentle eyes to him at last.

"You want you should keep your business private, Ethan? I'd feel it kind in you to tell me if it's so you can."

The schoolmaster cleared his throat importantly.

"I'm offered a position to teach in an academy near to Boston."

His voice had a solemnity due its message.

"Oh, Ethan, would you go 'way from Pettipaug?"

Exile oneself from this ravishment of field and river was her meaning, but he took it in another personal sense, and a faint red tinged his pale face.

"I shouldn't go right off by any means." He bent over her a little, and drew the rug close. "The principal of th' academy's over to New London now; he wrote me to come see him."

"'Tis a great opportunity," the girl said, striving to bring her mood to his. "You tell me more o' it."

Ethan always found it pleasantly easy to talk to this quiet girl; she was neither stimulating nor controversial, just sympathetic. In his heart he

thought her a little dull, and inclined to act upon prosaic lines; her sister Hetty had twice the fire and go in her, but good, and prudent, and lovable, certainly she was. He had pondered over her often that winter, especially in the last two days since the noble offer from Boston. He was getting on in years, the set ways of old bachelorhood had fastened their hooks into him already, he must be quick about it if he would launch out into affairs amatory. Where could man find a prettier or a sweeter little wife than the girl who sat by him, charming in her blue dress and bonnet? He looked down at her with a kindly smile warming his bleak face, and laid his hand strongly on hers for an instant.

Ora gave his fingers a quick touch before drawing hers away. She liked Ethan more than she could say; he had the sensitive honor of an elder generation, and he alone of all her friends could tell her of the round world and they that dwell thereon beyond the hills of Pettipaug. If he went to Boston to live, she—suddenly Pettipaug grew narrow and homely to her vision. To see the world!

Thus inclining kindly to one another, the two drove along in cheerful converse till they reached Lyme Ferry.

Ora's sailor heart leaped within her at the sight of the broad water, and the old scow that bore across it the few travelers of that day.

"Oh," she said in a deep breath, "th' ferry!"

"You ain't set back by it, are you? It's safe as a house, with Lysander Cummins a-runnin' it."

Ora smiled from out an amusement so deep it gave no sign. Afraid of her river!

A drove of scatter-witted sheep, the shepherd, and themselves made the voyagers. The ancient ferryman propelled his craft by a windlass hand-turned.

"Keep her headed upstream," he shouted to his helper as the boat caught the current of mid-river. "Dumber'n a clam, he is," he confided to Ora and Ethan. "My mate's sick to Saybrook.

This boy ought to be set to hoein' beans, if so be he'd know 'em in th' hill. Look out, you! Head up! Upstream, you tarnation gummy, you!"

The scow swung dizzily in the current, and heeled to a flow of wind. The silly sheep, bleating timorously, broke for the upside. Their weight righted the scow too suddenly. She dipped to the other side heavily, and water lapped her gunwale.

Ora, seated on a pile of lumber that filled the stern, was pitched headlong off over the side. She caught the stern chain, stretched across the open end, and clung to it, half in the scow, half over the water.

Ethan saw her disappear, and waited, stunned, for the splash that should tell him she was in the river, bitter still from the spring ice, perhaps never to rise from it. Then, starting from his daze, he scrambled down the lumber to the floor of the scow. His heart plunged like a terrified horse at the relief of seeing her still there; his blood gurgled in his throat so he gulped a if he were choking. He dropped on his knees, seized her under the arms, and dragged her over the chain. For an instant he held her, soft, and small, and warm, in his arms.

"You hurt you?" he panted, as he set her on her feet.

Crises were rare in Ethan's regulated life; he gasped from excitement more than from physical strain.

"I guess not. I hope I ain't got my gownd all over dirt," answered Ora calmly. She was far less perturbed than he.

Ethan, an unimaginative man for ordinary days, still saw the cold river—he did not love the water—close over that soft yellow hair and the pink flowers above the pinker cheeks. In some irrational way he could not follow, Ora seemed suddenly sweet and precious.

"I tell you, you gave me a liv'ly scare," he told her as he helped her brush her dress.

"Oh, I'd have come up all right," she answered, with her curious faith in the water. "The river's my friend."

"Nonsense!" returned Ethan uncom-



She followed him till the great ship had rounded Eastern Point, and knew her heart went with him.

promisingly, and went to look after his horses.

The drive up along the hills was different from their morning's start, that they both felt. Some deeper mood ruled them both. From comments on the sights of the woodside they fell into thoughtful silence. Even their mid-morning lunch of pie and cheese under a friendly oak did not lift this soberness.

"Ora," Ethan broke a long silence, "I'm a-plottin' to go 'way this summer vacation to study a spell."

The girl looked up wonderingly; surely Ethan was a compendium of all knowledge now. Then wonder saddened to regret; in the steady, hard work of the summer farming the school-master was the only one who had time to be "a play boy" with her.

"All summer?" she asked, and loneliness filled her voice.

"Ora," he began again, and his throat was husky, "how would it seem if you an' me was to join?"

It was said, not as he would have it, in polished, rounded periods vibrant with emotion, but as lumpishly as one of his own raw schoolboys might.

"You an' me have been acquainted since you was in th' primer class to school an' I was studyin' rhetoric, an' our families went to school together likewise. We know th' best o' each other an' th' worst, an' th' worst o'

you, Ora, is good as most women's best."

He struggled for the tender word, the moving phrase that should embody the real love warm within him, but so dry were the courses of his everyday thoughts, no mellow terms helped him now in his need. His voice creaked hoarsely as he plowed ahead.

"I can offer you consid'ble, as I view it. My folks have always been well thought of in th' county, an' I had a righteous upbringin'. I've got an education, an' father's will left me so I don't have to lean on any school for my livin'. Now I got this handsome openin' over to Boston I can give you a real good, pretty home, an' a chance to live out 'mong folks that are different from those that stay right long, year in, year out, to Pettipaug. Mother always said I was a good son, an' Clelia deems me a good brother; you needn't be afeard I won't make a kind husband."

Ora turned the sincere clarity of her gaze upon him. She had never been courted in good set terms before, and the strangeness of it moved her terribly. Yet under the outer stir she felt, wonderingly, deep within her, a heart of untouched calm, like the peace of the ocean far down below its plunging waves.

"You set by me, Ethan?" she said simply.

The man moistened his lips, and

strove for speech, which hung a little on his amazed inner comment that she was different from other girls, and sweet as a flower though she was, she did act pretty childish sometimes. The question and the manner of it affronted him now, as if it were a little unmaidenly.

"I'm a offerin' you my name an' all I got to share always," he said stiffly.

Something filmed the clear shine of the girl's eyes, like a cloud across the sunlight.

"You do prize me?" the man cried in a sudden trembling, and the emotion he could not express shook his voice.

"Yes." Ora seemed to be pondering.

"Yes, I do prize you."

"An' you'll wed me 'fore I go this summer?"

"Yes," very gently.

Ethan clasped her two hands in his under the rug. He wanted to kiss her little pink face, but at that moment a wagonload of laughing girls drove by, and the chance was lost. He needed both hands for his horses, too; so they drove along decorously, talking somewhat of their plan, but chiefly of the passing sights and happenings of the journey.

As they drove up to Sister Clelia's, Ora spoke a little breathlessly, out of a wish she could not fathom.

"Let's not let on to Clelia or anybody—how 'tis with us yet, Ethan."

The man, cautious, reticent, even suspicious himself, looked at her with a severity of expression his scholars knew for a storm signal.

"Why not?" he asked impatiently.

Ora flushed a deep color, tears gleamed in her eyes; they were for the mystery of a life, that holds happiness and pain, as it were, in either hand, but Ethan judged he had hurt her.

"I shan't tell a soul till you give th' word, dear," he answered in affectionate remorse; yet again she seemed curiously immature to him.

The day was a strange daze to Ora; she was bemused and heard Clelia's lively chat as the voice of one calling out of a dream. She had set her feet upon the unknown trail to happiness or

to misery, and all she could tell of her journey's start was that it began in a fog. She was glad when Ethan returned from his business, and took her forth to see the sights.

"I don't know as you'll feel any great of an interest in th' wharves," he explained, as they wound about the narrow streets, "but folks deem it a sightly spot for a view, an' it's one o' th' ship-pin' centers o' th' country."

Ora's answer was lost in her cry of surprise. They had come to the end of a narrow lane that twisted around suddenly out on a dock, and they saw the long, straight ribbon of New London Harbor, and the green hills of Croton, and the white farmsteads sprinkled among them. Sea and sky were all enchanting blue, unstained by smoke of engines; lobster boats, fishing smacks, and coastwise schooners swayed at anchor, or dipped to the keen wind, and flocks of gulls wheeled and called above them.

"Oh!" cried the girl again. "Oh, you beautiful, beautiful sea!"

Her voice sank to a whisper, she stretched her hands out to it, and all unconscious ran to the edge of the pier.

"Steady, there!" Ethan gripped her with a large hand. "One shy a day at drownin' 'll suit me! 'Tis a pretty harbor," he conceded. "Grrr, but this wind kind o' searches a fellow." He shrugged his neck down into his coat collar.

Ora heard not a word; in the strange old phrase of the North coast, "the sea had got her." Intent, silent, she drank in its salt with her breath, its loveliness with her heart.

"Look at that fellow, off to India, or China, most like."

Ethan's touch on her arm turned her gaze to the next wharf.

A great square-rigged bark was slowly getting under way. Already her great sails drew to the wind, her decks were quick with the ordered confusion of running men. A group of people were waving good-bys on the wharf, and still calling out last messages; among them a pretty, girlish woman with a very young baby in her arms, which she held up high toward the ship.

Its father, the captain, saw it, ceased for an instant his swift commands, and shouted in a voice that rang over the lane of water:

"Good-by, Baby!"

Ora's heart stopped for a beat, then drummed fiercely against her side. She fixed her eyes on the tall, lithe captain as if she could draw him to her across the widening sea by the power of her gaze. She would have known him, his bold face and haunting voice, in any part of the world. He was the same as on that wonderful day nearly two years ago, a little heavier, a little browner, more self-confident—if that were possible—but the same magnetic, splendid, compelling sailor. He did not notice her at all, his whole mind was on his sail. She followed him till the great ship had rounded Eastern Point and only her topsails showed above the trees, and knew her heart went with him.

"Smart navigator that," commented the schoolmaster, who, in face of his calling, was sufficiently of Pettipaug to know good seamanship when he met it.

The girl drew a long breath, opened her lips voicelessly, and closed them upon a pledge made for life. Long ago Cap'n Marny had forgotten whatever small place she had found in his memory; he was married and a father, and would never again be seen by her, even thus fortuitously, would never again give her a thought.

So be it. Yet she loved him with a power that shook the hidden places of her spirit. Bound to no human lover, she would be loyal to love itself. Faithful to that "law in her members," her years might be lonely, but they would be true; like the nameless prisoner of the Tower, of whom she would never hear, she cut, upon the walls of the prison of circumstances, the motto "*saro fideli*."

All the way home she talked with animation to Ethan; he was no more that half stranger, her lover, but her good old friend of many memories. Her breast ached for him as a sensitive doctor may grieve for the patient he must wound to heal. If only he could

have prized some one else! In a flash a hope lighted from the wish. For as they drove into her own yard, her sister Hetty at the well called out a greeting of pleasant raillery. Ethan flung back awkwardly, for his wits were stiff. Hetty, the most nimble-tongued of all the Marshes, tossed him the ball again light and swift, and ran, a mocking fairy in the moonlight.

"Well, sirs"—Ethan laughed in helpless admiration—"that sister o' yours is a cute one. Any fellow who tries it on her will get his comeupons."

"Hetty's real droll," agreed Ora quickly, "but she's got th' prettiest disposition, too, for all she's such a hector."

"Pretty in th' face, too," added the man, and Ora knew, with a great relief, that for him, bruised as her dismissal would leave him, there would be balm in Gilead.

The next fortnight was May warm. Spring flooded up the country in a tide of ardent green. The eager flew to their gardens, the season wise shook ancient heads, and boded darkly concerning "weather breeders." Ora roamed restlessly about her world, unable to fix her desire on any task of house or garden. This was partly the spring wanderlust, partly that an abiding sorrow frets the bearer of it, who has not lived long with it, by the sense that to-morrow, or at most next week, its pain must cease.

One morning, pretty as summer, Ora, coming home by the shore, found Uncle Joey Bogue loading nets into the *Isaac Webb*.

"Goin' fishin', Uncle Joey?" she called to her old friend.

"Bound for Grassy Hill," he answered. "Eph Willets sent for these nets. I knit 'em this winter."

"Ain't th' river sightly?"

She stood close by the boat now, looking down on the fisherman.

"Tol'ble, tol'ble." He hid his love for it under gruffness. "What say to goin' up th' river 'long o' me? Nice warm day an' breeze clever as a kitten." He cocked his old eyes slyly at her, for this was an invitation often urged, al-

ways refused. "You don't need no bunnet," noting her hatless estate.

Ora smiled a little sadly; not once since that marvelous afternoon had she sailed on the river. Perhaps she had feared to break the spell of memory, perhaps ancient obediences still ruled in her. Now, with a little shiver as if she threw off invisible hands, she stepped aboard.

"Mother'll think I'm over to Grandma Hardin's to dinner," she murmured.

The slender cove behind the island was all a mist of green as if a veil of verdancy had been flung over the trees. Uncle Joey threaded the *Isaac* in and out among the rocks upon which Ora once had almost suffered wreck, and brought her to at an ancient, moss-grown wharf, under the cliffs. Everything seemed asleep in the morning sun. Only one man knelt on the shingle working over a rowboat.

"Cricky!" Uncle Joey's voice was a cracked whisper. "If that ain't Marden Darset, him that was 'cused o' murderin' his uncle, long two years back. What th' ol' boy he a-doin' up here?"

The man rose to his feet.

"I've negotiated a sale o' this ol' bo't," he said exactly as if he had heard, "an' while I'm a-waitin' for th' fellow to come down river to get her, I kind o' thought I'd slick her up a dight."

He set down his pail and swab, and advanced with his splendid laugh to help the newcomers.

"Kind o' crampin', all bailed up 'mong them nets."

Uncle Joey stretched his legs, and inspected with disapproving thoroughness a new boat waiting to be launched.

Ora sat down on a low stanchion head because she trembled so she could not stand. The sailor found himself a place on a heavy log near her.

"Dreadful fiddlin' lines for a river b'ot, I call 'em." Uncle Joey had finished his survey. "Who owns her?" The freemasonry of all seafaring folk was in his tones.

"Jabez Bill, from th' Narrers; he's goin' to race her."

"Huh!" Uncle Joey's opinion was terse. "How come you up along here?

Thought you was to sea in th' *Dauntless*?"

He swung around on the young man.

"Goin' next week. A schooner fouled her off Hatchets in th' fog, an' she's up for repairs. She warn't due to sail from Boston till end o' this week, anyways; she'd got to take in cargo."

"You ain't been in these parts since your uncle got hurt, have ye?"

The old man planted himself in front of the captain, as if he were bent on ferreting out all his past.

Young Darset seemed very obliging as to his history. "Sailed th' day doctor said he was goin' to pull through, my ship had been awaitin' through th' shindy for me." He smiled, not on the fisherman, but on Ora, as he talked. "I plotted to run up quick's I got back from China to see Uncle 'Siah an'—some other folks. I counted on a smart run there an' back, but I had th' dev—mighty bad luck; got knifed in a row with pirates in th' Yellow Sea, an' couldn't tell my own name for two months. Then afore I could ship my cargo some kind o' a blasted fever got a-holt o' me an' laid me by th' heels for another month. My mate took th' ship out while I was in my berth, an' run her into a tornado that liked to have tore her sticks clean out, an' we had to put back for repairs."

Lightly the sailor told these "moving accidents by flood and field"; they were all in the day's work, even at twenty-four.

"Soon as I could make New London an' out 'gain to Boston, I cut for here."

His smile lighted his whole face till it glowed.

"Thought you'd look in on ol' Uncle 'Siah, eh?"

Uncle Joey grew more and more genial in the sun of the captain's presence.

"Yes, some. Mostly I come to get my wife."

"I saw her over to New London, an' th' baby."

These were the first words Ora had spoken, and they sounded like another woman's voice, a tired, discouraged woman.

The young man sent his great laugh echoing against the cliffs.

"That warn't her, the one you saw on Lewis' Wharf, with her father an' mother an' th' baby, that day you an' th' man watched th' *Dauntless* off." So he had recognized her. "That's Milly Stocket, Cap'n Eben Stocket's wife. They was in port in China when I was hurt, an' she took awful good care o' me. She's a proper nice woman, Milly is. They wanted me to name th' little girl, an' stand up for her to th' christenin'.

"What you call her?" the girl asked tenderly.

It seemed pretty to her to think of this great, lusty sailor playing with a little baby.

He dropped his voice, and his eyes grew darkly soft.

"Nora Regan. 'Twas th' name o' th' sweetest woman I ever knew."

"You goin' to take your wife on th' v'yage 'long o' you?" The old man broke the little silence.

"I got to get her first," laughed the other. "We ain't spliced yet. But she's a-comin' sure 'nough, right in th' cabin o' th' *Dauntless*. I had it all painted up pretty for her, an' new fixin's put in."

"V'yages is wearin' on womenfolks, th' sea ain't their nat'ral element." The ancient shook his head bodingly.

"It's hers," stoutly maintained the lover. "She's a sailor born."

"I 'low you think that girl o' yourn's pretty nigh all complete, eh?" Uncle Joey grinned with bachelor skepticism.

For the first time, Cap'n Marny turned his look upon the other man.

"She's th' bravest, sweetest, most beautiful girl in this country, an' I'll love every bone of her little body as long as I live." His voice shook with the fire and power of his desire.

"Well! Well! There! There!"

Uncle Joey was ter'ble put to it, as he afterward declared, at the outburst; Pettipaug men never used such great words nor called on the sky and sun to witness their affection.

Ora's lips quivered, her small face was piteous. "How bitter a thing it is

to look into happiness through another man's eyes!" She longed to creep home, and hide away where she could never hear again those vibrant tones thrilling in her ears.

"I guess I'll move 'long up to Eph's." The old fisherman shuffled his feet awkwardly. "You better stay down here where it's sightly, girl; it's kind o' a dull road to his place."

He shouldered the nets, and trudged off.

The instant his broad back vanished around the cliff, the sailor leaped up, clicked a quick pigeon wing with his feet, and, bending in a flash, caught Ora up close into his arms.

"You little dearie," he said, half amused, half serious, all tenderness.

Ora felt his kiss on her cheek, his hand stroke her hair. She put her arms around his neck, and, forgetful of wives for whom new cabins were arranged, lay, small and trembling, against his heart.

"Ain't you th' little sweet girl, alanna," he whispered in a strange ecstasy of love.

Ora pulled herself out of the circle of his arms; her quiet eyes were rather wild.

"Where is she—th' other girl—th' one you're tokened to wed?"

Marden drew her up to him again.

"Oh, my Lord, sweetheart, she ain't any place but just here. I come all th' way from China to wed you." He put his cheek down on her soft hair, and rubbed it gently about. "The first minute I clapped my eyes onto you knowin' no more o' navigation than a ship's boy, yet sailin' that cranky ol' tub like you couldn't sink her, I was drawn to you, an' when you sat there, in the stern, your little face all worried up for fear I was a thief or a cutthroat, yet never so much as dreamin' you could give me up to th' law, I fell in love with you all complete. Then when there warn't a man, not even 'mong them as I sailed with, stood by me, when things was blackest, you stepped out there in that public highway brave, an' sweet, an' trustin'. Well——"

He closed his arms hard around her, and kissed her with a passion of devotion.

"I meant to wed you if so be I lived, if I had to wait fifty year," he went on, "but I had to take my ship. Time's seemed dreadful long, an' things plaguety contrary, not knowin' if you was alive, even. I tell you when I see you a-standin' on that wharf t'other day, I pretty near rammed th' *Dauntless* into Coit's Buoy I was so kind o' dazed with happiness."

Ora stood away from him, and searched him with the innocence of her gaze, as open as a child's.

"How'd you know I prized you same as you did me?" she asked seriously.

A flicker of laughter slid into the sailor's eyes. He shook her gently, a hand on either shoulder.

"Little dear, I wanted you so bad I had to believe you felt the same way.

Anyhow, I was goin' to have you, whether or no."

She laughed, the bubbling sound of their first meeting. Then her eyes grew round with wonder.

"Why, Marny Darset," she expostulated, "you can't wed me; you don't know what my name is!"

The young man laughed outright; then in his eyes grew a look that touched the very spring of life itself within her, so that her breast rose in a sob, and tears hung upon her lashes; the beauty and the magic of love were breaking her heart.

"I know you," he said in a low voice.

Suddenly he flashed out upon her his magnificent gayety and vitality, and he caught her again in his arms.

"It don't matter what your name is now, acushla," he cried joyously, "for next week it's goin' to be Mis' Cap'n Marden Darset."



The Better Awakening

LAST night, dear child, the dream I dreamed
Was of strange lands and you;
A lake I never saw, that gleamed
Like turquoise stones of blue.

The sun of spring was bold and bright;
The spikes of bloom stood free
Upon the chestnut boughs, as might
Yule candles on a tree.

Yet was I not at peace; a space
I could not bridge at will
Lay 'twixt my heart and your dear face,
Though fast I followed still.

I waked as morning broke. The sky
And snow were rosy dressed;
A wee, belated moon rode high
With horns that pointed west.

For joy I laughed—for where's the charm
Of that dream loveliness,
When in this plainer world, my arm
May clasp you, shield, caress?

JEANNIE PENDLETON EWING.



The Rear Tenement to the Rescue

By Hildegard Lavender

ILLUSTRATED BY H. HAYGARTH LEONARD

IT is perfectly true that when Ferdinand and Hortense first saw the destined house, they had no idea that behind it there were rear tenements. They knew that it was in an unfashionable—even a dingy—neighborhood; they knew that it was in shocking need of repair. But the rear tenements they did not suspect. They did not suspect them even when, their five years' lease signed, sealed, and delivered, their painters, plumbers, and glaziers duly engaged, they wandered about the pocket handkerchief of a back yard, and commiserated their friends who had no sickly plane tree among their possessions, and no fence over which vines might presumably be induced to trail later. The reason for their blindness was one which their friends would have understood and forgiven. They were in love, and in that blindly blissful stage of an engagement in which a home is planned.

When their attention was finally directed, by a caustic family connection, to the fact of the rear tenements, and to the further fact that access to these was led by a deeply subterranean passage beneath their own cellar, they experienced a few seconds of anger against the real-estate agent who had their contract now securely locked in his safe; and then they declared that they really didn't care, anyway; people in New York—people of the so-called upper classes, to which they claimed to

belong, knew far too little of their poorer neighbors, anyway.

Indeed, the caustic family connection gave it as her opinion that Ferdinand and Hortense were so glad to be assured of the existence of human beings even poorer than themselves, that they could, for that assurance's sake, overlook the inconvenience of the subcellar passage under their house. The caustic relative did not approve of the remodeling of dingy, little, old houses in forgotten quarters of the town by impecunious young artist folk; she didn't approve of impecuniosity, or of art, and only half approved of Hortense, who was having a big studio made on the top story of the little house. She was eloquent on the advantages of the Harlem flat.

But Ferdinand and Hortense let her Cassandra-like prophecies trickle past them unheard and unheeded. Had they not worked it out on paper a hundred times—the immense, practical advantages of their scheme over all others? Was not the little house to be converted into two totally separate apartments, and was not Ferdinand's widowed sister to take the lower one on her return from Europe, while in the upper one Hortense developed into a perfect housewife, and finished a few masterpieces? And wasn't it all going to be cheaper than any cheapest Harlem flat in the world?

And then one day, before the fresh



They were in love, and in that blindly blissful stage of an engagement in which a home is planned.

paint was quite dry, or the old, unbricked fireplaces—that blessed little old house was simply full of fireplaces—had all been tested for their drawing capacity, the studio building in which Hortense was pursuing her art at present was condemned by a vigilant inspector of buildings; and Hortense was compelled to find an immediate new abode. And wouldn't two movings of all her belongings within three months—the wedding day was three months distant—be silly beyond words? And weren't she and Ferdinand above and beyond petty conventions? And, anyway, who said that there was any convention prohibiting a prospective bride

from using before her marriage the studio in her prospective married home?

Besides, where was another good studio to be had? And, anyway, her mother would come on from Sandusky and stay with her; and they would sublet from Ferdinand in the most businesslike manner possible, paying in advance—on that she insisted.

Whereupon Hortense's mother obediently appeared from Sandusky, and bewailed the differences between that center and the little, old, forgotten backwater in Greenwich Village, New York City, in which her daughter was to dwell; but she found some compen-

sation in the shops, and began hemming tablecloths and dish towels industriously.

The cause of the untimely, unseemly, and altogether reprehensible quarrel between the lovers at so advanced a stage of their engagement is shrouded in some obscurity. While it lasted, Hortense implied, darkly, that Ferdinand was a tyrant to whom no woman of free ancestry could trust her life and liberty, while Ferdinand's explanation contained the implicit information that a man would be a fool to tie up for existence with a woman whom he had discovered to be fickle in her feelings and ungovernable in her temper.

Later, after their reconciliation, Hortense was understood to claim entire responsibility for "having nearly wrecked our two lives," while Ferdinand stoutly declared that he was a jealous, unreasoning, hot-headed, overbearing brute.

However all this may have been, quarrel they did within a month of their wedding day; and they quarreled noisily, tempestuously, with recriminations and returning of letters and rings, and with public declarations of independence. They became to each other landlord and tenant, and nothing more. Miss Garvan signified her intention of moving out at the expiration of her lease, and had certain criticisms to make upon the incapacity of the steam-heating furnace; and Mr. Holding announced that the property would be by no means a dead loss to him, for the Rosses were wild to lease the upper apartment, and he himself would board in the lower with his sister Rosa when she came home.

It was probably in the rôle of a landlord keeping a watchful eye upon his property that Ferdinand developed the habit, as Hortense's last week neared its end, of patrolling the quaint, short street—preferably after midnight. And it was probably because she wanted to get the full worth of her money that Hortense, as the days wore on, developed the habit of staying indoors all the time. Doubtless it was this lack of exercise and outdoor air which made her pale, and destroyed her appetite for

the most delicate titbits that Mrs. Garvan and Mammy Chloe could devise between them, though both were famous cooks.

Two nights before the end of the month, Ferdinand stole quietly into the street, and looked up toward the big studio glass in the top story. It was dark as usual at that hour. All the windows of the little house—many-paned windows, over which Hortense had raved when they had found the



He remembered a key that had been found to fit the front door.

little house—were blank beneath their old-fashioned cornices.

Ferdinand told himself—so he has since said—that he could scarcely endure the thought of the hardness of heart, the obstinacy of pride, which prevented Hortense from coming straight down to the dark-green Dutch door, with its brass knocker, to tell him how she regretted all her wrongdoing toward him; he wanted her to come so badly, so sorely, that it seemed almost incredible she should not respond to his yearning. He glanced toward the door,

praying it to open; if Hortense would only appear, to mail a midnight letter or to get a whiff of midnight air, he, Ferdinand, forgetting his wrongs, would do the rest.

And as he glanced, the breath was suddenly gone from him as though a mighty blow had been struck. For pale and misty in the light from the corner lamp, there fluttered the symbol of death—of the death of one young, unwed!

"Oh, God! God!" cried Ferdinand, clenching his fingers into his palms. Hortense—and he not near her! The silly, silly quarrel!

He went up the steps. He could not bear to find the bell beneath that white crêpe. But he must go in—he must fall at the feet of Hortense's mother—he must kneel beside his beloved one, praying her forgiveness. He must know. He remembered a key upon his key ring that had been found to fit the front door in the days when they were remodeling the house. Thank Heaven, he had always forgotten to have the lock changed! He entered the dark hall out of which he had strode so hotly a month ago, and, shaking all over, he crept up the stairs.

There was a light beneath the door of the room they had designed for their sitting room. Her mother kept vigil alone. He knocked—softly, softly.

There was a sound of a chair moving—a second's hesitation—and then a step approached—a quick, light step, not like Mrs. Garvan's. Was he insane? But before he had made up his mind on that

point, he heard the unmistakable sound of a key turning. And then a frightened voice—frightened, but inexpressibly dear—quaveringly demanded:

"Who are you—and what do you want?"

Somehow he managed to tell her who he was, and what he wanted. The sitting-room door key turned again the other way, and Hortense, sad and pale, but alive, alive, alive, was in his arms.

The Rear Tenement explained the next morning, between its sobs. It had no front door upon which to hang its advertisement of its loss and sorrow.

"An' she was one, miss, did so like things done decent like! Goin' under your place, like what we do, to get to ourn, it seemed like your front door was ours—an' so—an' so—" And the Rear Tenement put its gingham apron to its eyes.

So that, after all, the first ceremony celebrated at the little house was not a wedding jollification or a housewarming. But a girl who "did so like things done decent like" used the front door as though it were her own, and went forth from it clad in white and flowers; and in the mourning of her kinsfolk there was a note of pride and happiness.

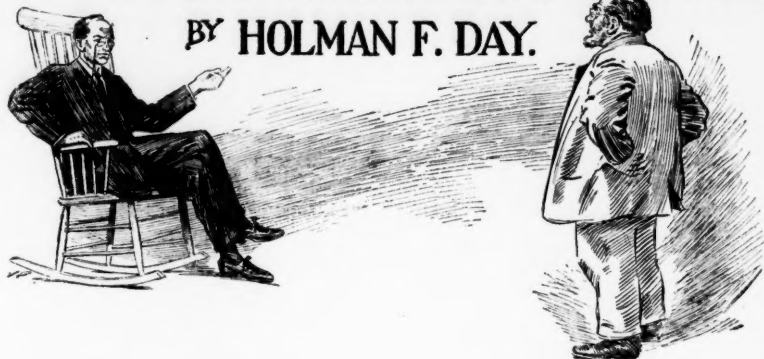
And deep in their hearts, Ferdinand and Hortense feel that this was a tenderer consecration of their new home, a surer seal upon their reconciliation than any pageantry of selfish joy could be.

Though, as the caustic family connection points out, calculating the cost of cakes and ale, of these latter there has been no lack of either!



THROUGH WALLAGRASS "INCOG"

BY HOLMAN F. DAY.



CAP'N AARON SPROUL, the high sheriff of Cuxabexis County, walked down the steps of his jail into a particularly bright May morning, but his countenance did not in the least reflect the brightness of the weather. He was obeying a summons without alacrity. That summons was from the judge who had just finished a term of court in the county. The messenger had announced that the sheriff was impatiently awaited by the judge in his room at the Newry Hotel.

As the sheriff plodded on despondently, he mentally reviewed the situation. He was in no doubt in his own mind as to why the judge had summoned him so peremptorily.

"Take a man as hard as that judge is, harder'n a junk of salt hoss on a New Bedford whaler, and it'll be like this when I get there," he mused. "He'll clank his teeth like a bulldog chawin' tripe, and he'll say: 'Mister Sheriff, the last thing I did before adjournin' court siny die yesterday afternoon was to send twenty women suffrageters to your jail for contempt of my court, didn't I?' And I'll say: 'Yes, your honor.' And he'll say: 'Where are them women?'"

Cap'n Sproul tugged at his short beard, his eyes on the sidewalk.

"And I'll say: 'They broke jail, your honor.' But I can't look him in the

eye whilst I'm sayin' it. And he'll rise up and yap: 'You're speakin' to a supreme judge, not an infant, Mister Sheriff. I want the truth of this thing instantly.' And suppose I tell him the truth, that they was a cussed nuisance in our jail, and the thing would make a laughin' stock of the county, and so I rigged a plot to fire 'em out and send 'em home where they belonged? Well, I've seen mad judges operate before! He'll either commit me to my own jail till he gets home from the spring fishin' trip he's plannin' on, or else he'll send me out a-lassoin' them women back into jail again—and, betwixt the two jobs, give me the jail!" He sighed. "Take a man that's had command of a ship for goin' on thutty years, with a license to boss things from his own quarter-deck to his own likin', and you're apt to do things overnight that look a blame sight different to you next mornin'," he concluded mournfully.

With a curt nod for the landlord, he marched upstairs, and rapped on the door of the judge's room. The well-known, raspy tones of his honor invited him to enter. He found his distinguished superior sitting in a high-backed rocking-chair, and wearing a very sour face.

"Mr. Sheriff, I committed some twenty women to your custody yester-

day afternoon, charged with contempt of court."

"You're sayin' it just about as I figured you'd say it," was the reply, which the judge seemed to find somewhat cryptic.

His honor looked him over with a scowl.

"I don't know as I care to have any comments on my methods of expressing myself. I made a simple statement. I will add that the affair puts me in a most embarrassing position."

"You and I can shake hands on that," blurted the cap'n.

After another sharp look, the judge seemed to see light.

"Oh, you mean to say that you find the women very annoying as prisoners? I can understand how they are troubling you. But the insult to the court was such that I could not overlook it or dismiss them with a mere reprimand. In fact, they would not even leave the courtroom when I ordered them out. Now, Mr. Sheriff, haven't you some power of persuasion with those women? Can't you induce them to purge themselves of contempt by apologies? I will promise to remit the fines."

"I begged and argued with 'em, and they wouldn't," stated the sheriff, standing, shivering, on the brink of the truth and afraid to plunge in.

"Their husbands, then! Get their husbands to come around, and talk with them, and——"

"Tried the husbands, too! Husbands won't interfere. Seem to be sort of happy and relieved because they won't be bothered by them women for a spell. And, after what I've been through with the women, I don't blame the husbands much. I hope husbands will relish their vacation."

The judge gritted his teeth.

"I'll not relish mine," he snapped. "I expected that the fools would immediately purge themselves of contempt. But you cannot reckon on what a woman fanatic will do. It's a very bad mess. But I must end the scandal. Mr. Sheriff, go back and tell those women that they——"

"Excuse me for breakin' in, your

honor, but I might as well have this agony over with right now. Them women ain't in that jail!"

"Why not?" with amazement, and something else that the sheriff did not dare hope was relief.

"I worked 'em into a state of mind where they was willin' to run if they got the chance—and then I gave 'em the chance," said the cap'n doggedly. "I worked a plot on 'em—got 'em out of the jail, and locked the doors so they couldn't get back again. I couldn't see any pertickler sense in havin' 'em there. Now, that's the plain, straight truth—and I'm ready to take my medicine."

He braced himself defiantly, and glared at the judge. He expected something fearful in the way of explosion. Just then the judge seemed to be incapable of speech.

"If you want details," the sheriff went on, "I'll say that the scheme was this. I——"

"Not a word more! Not a word!" cried his superior. "It's something I don't care to know officially. I must not know it officially. If I do not know it—*officially*—it will save complications."

He got out of his chair, and advanced on the sheriff. To the amazement of the latter, his face was wreathed in smiles. He chuckled. He grabbed the sheriff's stubby hand in both his own.

"You're a man of resource. I can see that plainly. You have cut the Gordian knot. I'll tell you frankly, I'm very much relieved. It was a sad mess as it stood."

Cap'n Sproul allowed his limp hand to be wagged in the judge's grasp. Having nerved himself to meet vituperation, this fulsome and delighted praise took him off his feet.

"Of course, the matter is all very irregular, Sheriff Sproul. I can acknowledge that much to you in confidence. But lacking *official* knowledge, as I do"—the judge winked, an act of levity that made the cap'n gasp—"I feel that I can escape fairly gracefully from the situation. I shall hurry out of town just as soon as possible. It's fortunate that I've arranged for a vacation. I can assure you, Mr. Sheriff, that I shall hide

myself so well that no rumor of this affront to the dignity of the court will reach me. And when a thing of this sort is a few weeks old, it can be juggled out of sight of the public very easily."

He winked again. After a somewhat lengthy acquaintance with this fine example of the ossified human being, Cap'n Sproul viewed that wink with something like consternation. A tombstone doing a jig would not have astonished him more.

"Look here," added the judge, "I can depend on you to lie a little for me, can't I, in case any questions are asked? Use tact, you know, use tact!"

He looked the sheriff up and down. Sudden apprehension as to the amount of tact this old sea dog possessed dimmed the joy in his eyes.

"The county attorney has been informing me that you have no prisoners in your jail," he said.

"He's right. The last bunch I had broke jail on me."

The cap'n's courage had revived a bit, and he dared to return the judge's wink.

"I've got a rather surprising proposition to make to you, Mr. Sheriff," said his honor briskly. "It even surprises me a bit. But we've got to set this particular kettle of fish down on the ground very softly, indeed. It mustn't slop over. If neither of us is in sight for foolish questions to be aimed at, and your turnkey can be muzzled——"

"He only knows they broke jail," the sheriff hastened to say.

"Very well. Listen! My doctor has ordered a few weeks in the country for me. Complete rest of mind. Physical exercise of a gentle sort. Wonderful recuperative elements to be found in a close communion with nature, you un-



Standing at the head of the stairs, he threw the wood stick by stick, down into the front hallway.

derstand. I shall hide myself away completely. You have proved yourself such a man of resource, you have done so much to clear up a very vexatious situation that would have troubled me in my search for rest, that I'm moved to ask you to go along with me. I'm sure we can pass some very agreeable days together. What do you say?"

Cap'n Sproul returned his animated gaze with a look in which there was not much enthusiasm.

"I've tried two vacations, lookin' for rest and relaxation, and I've found out that I'd hoodoo any vacation, even if it was a Sunday-school picnic arranged by

the Apostle Paul for the Sea of Galilee. I ain't a safe man on a vacation. I mean all right, but after the last one I've sworn off, but thanking you for the compliment, just the same."

"I shall take chances on you," smiled the judge indulgently, looking on the cap'n's unwillingness as a whim. "I need a good, able-bodied companion. Now, I'm going to assert my authority. I order you to accompany me! The simple life for us, my dear sheriff. I'm taking the up-train in half an hour. Be at the station. Your jail is empty. There's no reason why you cannot go."

He winked again, and jovially pushed the sheriff out of the room.

Cap'n Sproul found himself trudging down to the railroad station a bit later in no very hopeful frame of mind. He banged his little valise against his legs in sour humor. But two considerations spurred him. His ingrained awe of a supreme judge made his honor's wishes much like law; the amazing and gratifying fashion in which his honor had greeted his confession made him more responsive than usual to those wishes.

The judge had discarded his high silk hat, and was making himself as inconspicuous at the railway station as possible, plainly relishing his escapade.

"I reckon it's lucky we got away when we did," confided the cap'n when they were safely on the train. He was beginning to relish his own part in the affair. "I met two of them suffragette women on the street just now, and one of 'em said that after they'd thought it over they could see that I'd rigged a plot to poke them out of the jail before they'd managed to get any glory out of bein' martyrs to the cause, and so they was figurin' on gettin' back in, and continuin' to be martyrs, and showin' you up as a law tyrant and a disgrace to civilization. B'lieve them's her words!"

"What did you tell her?" There were mingled concern and delight on his honor's face.

"Told her she and the rest better mind their eye, for I was bound off to get the law on what could be done to jail breakers, and expected to be back soon with something pretty hefty. And

in the meantime, if the Queen of Sheby herself should come ridin' up to that jail door on a camel, she wouldn't get in past that turnkey of mine."

"You're a man of resource. I say it again. Going to sea teaches a man to be quick in emergencies. And, by the way, I expect you'll be able to while away the time by some of your sea stories, Captain Sproul. It was a happy thought of mine, inviting you on this trip. I really feel like a boy running away from home for a lark. The law is an exacting mistress, Captain Sproul."

"I'll have to warn you over again that I'm a hoodoo to a vacation," insisted the sheriff. "Hurricane storm signals are up, and a few cyclones and earthquakes thrown in for luck when I start out for rest and relaxation. Never was intendin' to take another vacation. But you can't say I didn't give you fair notice of what to expect."

"A quaint conceit," smiled the judge, pulling his slouch hat lower and preparing for a smoke in rare good humor. "But I want to impress one thing carefully on your mind, sir. Remember that we're strictly incog. We're going far north into the Wallagrass section, where no one will know us. Then for the open country! No trains! No wagons! Foot it! Tramp in the open until we are weary, and then a meal and a bed in some tavern or farmhouse. Balm for the tired mind! A play time for the nerves! But strictly incog. No titles, understand!"

"The incogger the better, so fur's I'm concerned," stated the cap'n, still gloomy. "I've incogged it on both of my vacations, and it was mighty lucky for me I did. Left with a bunch of smuggled Chinamen on my hands one time, and shanghaied by lunatics the next time!"

"It will be an interesting tale to listen to some day when we are lolling under the shade of a wayside tree," the judge declared genially. "I'm sure I'm going to find you a very entertaining companion."

He pulled a paper-covered novel of adventure from his pocket, and left the

cap'n to mutter frank doubts of his own value as a vacation chum.

It was a long and somewhat tedious journey to the north country, necessitating several changes of trains. They tramped a few miles from the station at which the judge elected to alight, and came to a village as dusk descended.

The lights of a little tavern drew them as a candle draws moths. They found the landlord much occupied in attending to the comfort of a party which had arrived just ahead of them in a big surrey drawn by two horses. There were four rather boisterous men in the party, and the men had cases of fishing rods, and were plainly out for a vacation, also.

The boniface eyed the dusty pedestrians and their little valises with some disfavor, and reserved his chief attention for the boisterous gentlemen. The latter monopolized the office, and when supper was served demanded so much attention from the flustered waiter girl that the judge and the cap'n were not served until the merry four were well along in their meal.

"I've stood about as much of this as I'm goin' to stand," mumbled the cap'n to his companion, who was glowering on the others in his best judicial manner. They were passing a bottle of whisky among themselves, and were becoming more gay and assertive. "Keepin' a judge of the supreme——"

"Incog—incog! Remember!" protested his honor.

"Say, old bucks across there," belowned one of the men, "oil up your faces with a drink of good whisky, and don't look so blasted sour." He pushed the bottle toward them. "Drink up and be merry!"

The cap'n, taking his cue from the judge's snort of indignation, promptly pushed the bottle back. "Keep your rat p'ison over where it belongs," he blazed. Then he whirled on the flustered maid. "You bring along our meat and potatoes, miss," he commanded. "We've been set aside for that gang of Barb'ry pirates just as long as we propose to be!"

There was instant clamor on the

other side of the table, and some violent threats.

"Incog!" whispered the judge, shoving the cap'n back into his chair. "We cannot afford to be in a brawl."

"There won't be any brawl to it," growled the enraged sheriff. "It'll be massacree if you'll let me get at 'em."

The four vacationists opposite contented themselves with blustering threats as to what they were inclined to do to a couple of "tramps" who had insulted their betters, and, when they had cleaned out their plates, lighted their pipes, and stamped out into the tavern's general room.

The judge slashed his tough steak vengefully after they were gone, and entered upon a monologue regarding the mental, moral, and social attributes of certain winebibbing scalawags. But at the same time he impressed upon his sputtering companion the need of self-restraint.

"Remember that we are incog," he kept repeating.

"I see we be," stated the cap'n savagely. "But I'd give fifty dollars if there wasn't anything in *my* cogs. I ain't used to takin' lip nor hearin' it passed to a man of your standin'."

"We can afford to scorn such ill-bred varlets," insisted the judge, "aggravating as it may be. Keep remembering that we are out for rest and relaxation."

When the seekers for the quiet life appeared in the tavern office after supper they found the convivial four in a more amiable mood.

"We're not looking for trouble, old cocks," protested one of the men. "We're simply out for a good time and a little fishing. Come up to the room. We're going to have a quiet game, ten cents age and a quarter limit. What say?"

The cap'n slid horrified glance at the judge. The judge pinched his thin lips, and elevated his chin with offended dignity.

"My friend has informed you that we are not sots. I will now inform you that we are not gamblers."

He picked up his valise, asked the



He leaned over, and, before the man could dodge, smashed the bowl on his head.

landlord to show him to his room; and Cap'n Sproul, casting a particularly venomous glance over his shoulder at the jeering fishermen, followed. They were left in a room with two beds, and retired after calming their anger with the solace of tobacco.

But there was no sleep for them. The "game" was on. The players had an adjoining room, and stamping feet, hoarse hellos of mirth, or profane yells of disappointment told how the luck progressed. Two indignant wayfarers, tossing on their hard beds, soon learned by word of mouth several salient points of a game that they had never played.

One point was that a "full hand" was a signal for another drink, and that at the outset of a fishing trip the first game meant an all-night session. When this latter information came to the weary listeners in the next room, Cap'n Sproul arose, gasping anathema, and stumbled about the room, striking matches.

"What are you looking for?" inquired the judge hopefully.

"A bell to push! I'm goin' to find out if people that have paid for a night's rest have got to stand any such damnable hullabaloo as that. But there ain't even any bell in this cussed place."

In the dim light, the judge saw his companion grab several sticks of wood out of the little box beside the air-tight stove.

"No violence! No violence!" his honor protested fearfully. "Remember our incog!"

The cap'n rushed out into the corridor, not trusting himself to reply on the subject of "incog." That word had become the most hateful one in the language. Standing at the head of the stairs, he threw the wood, stick by stick, down into the front hallway. Four tremendous bangs stirred the echoes in the tavern. The landlord, rushing upstairs, an indignant specter in night-shirt, found an equally indignant specter in nightshirt at the head of the stairs.

"Glad to find out that one thing about this place is in order," the cap'n grimly informed his host. "Four rings bring the landlord. Now you needn't howl at me! Save your howls for them infernal g'rillas in that room there. We're payin' for a night's sleep, and we want it delivered."

"I cater to gents that come to my place like gents, and if common hoofers don't like the way I run my tavern they can hoof it out again," the landlord informed him violently. "And you throw any more wood down my front stairs to-night and out you go, anyway. And, by the way, I want two dollars apiece from you right now! I don't propose to have you light out on me!"

He marched into the room ahead of the raging cap'n, lighted the lamp, and remained until they had paid.

"Now, if you don't like the way I run things, you can dress and tramp it just as soon as you want to," he advised, departing.

After a period of reflection, the cap'n lighted his pipe, and propped himself up in bed. The judge, after shielding his eyes from the lamp and wrestling a while between weariness and the hoots from the gamesters, arose, secured his pipe, and joined the cap'n in a solemn smoking contest.

"Le's see," mused the sheriff, break-

ing the silence after a time, "what was it you told me that doctor said you needed when he prescribed this trip? Was it peace of mind and rest of body, combined with gentle exercise?"

"I believe that was it—along with nerve relaxation," said the judge. To the cap'n's surprise he smiled.

"We may as well look at the humor in the thing, Mr. Sheriff. It really is humorous, looking at it one way."

"I don't know what you can see from where you set," returned the cap'n grouchily; "but there ain't anything humorous to be seen from my side of the room, settin' here dog tired and listenin' to four soshes hootin', and hollerin', and raisin' ten, and goin' a quarter better, sweetenin' the pot—whatever it all means—and you a judge of the supreme court in this State and me a high sheriff!"

"Incog—incog!" warned his honor, still viewing the humor of the situation. "There's really something to laugh about in all this."

"You're gettin' all the fun, then," insisted the cap'n sourly. "If you'll let me go down and tell that fool landlord who we be, order him to keep hands off whilst I go into that room with a club, and give them striped hyenas a few lessons in manners and politeness, I may be able to get myself into a state of mind where I can fetch a giggle or two."

"Grin and bear it—grin and bear it! It's only for to-night, and we'll tramp far into the open to-morrow, and Nature will soothe us," counseled the judge cheerily. "'Go forth under the open sky and list to Nature's teachings,'" he quoted. He relighted his pipe. "Tell me a few stories of the sea, captain," he requested, after realizing from the continued noise in the other room that sleep was out of the question.

And the cap'n, selecting some particularly bloodthirsty incidents, yarned away gloomily until the May dawn appeared against the windows.

The judge counseling, they were first at table when the breakfast bell rang.

"We'll hurry up and get away from those hellhounds," averred his honor,



The cap'n glowered on him, picked up his valise, and departed at the heels of the judge.

snapping out his napkin spitefully. The cold gray of the morning after a sleepless night seemed to have completely dulled the edge of his appreciation of the humor of the situation.

"It's goin' to be safer for all hands," agreed the cap'n. "Take me the way I'm feelin' this mornin', and I ain't goin' to be no kind of a rollickin' companion for them dev'lish whippoor-wills!"

At that moment the quartet of "whippoorwills" entered the room tempestuously. Alcoholic geniality was theirs. They sat down, and grinned at the sullen pair across the table.

"I've heard rampageous hoodlums round a hotel in the night before now," cried one of the new arrivals, "but never anything to come up to the mark those two across there set last night. I couldn't sleep a wink. How about the rest of you?"

"Never closed our eyes all night!" was the chorus.

"Fun and frolic are all right in their place, gents," went on the first speaker;

"but when it's in a hotel where four tired and respectable fishermen are trying to sleep it's all wrong. I want to say I'd never believe two men could make so much noise and keep it up. I wonder where they're planning to stop to-night! Me for some other place, wherever it is!"

Cap'n Sproul, busy with a bowlful of hot oatmeal mush, paid strict attention to his breakfast. He did not dare to look up at his tormentors. He felt patience slipping its bounds.

"The curse of this nation to-day is this filling up the human stomach with hot oatmeal mush," went on the man opposite. "There are men who stuff themselves with it to start off the day. It acts on the nerves, makes a man cranky, and when it comes night he can't sleep, and so he goes kihooting around a hotel, keeping everybody awake. Talk about the liquor habit—the mush habit is worse! Our lunatic asylums are filled up with the victims of hot mush for breakfast. Here's the right thing to eat!"

The waitress, still flustered, had set his breakfast before him. It was finnan haddie.

Cap'n Sproul suspended operations' a moment on his mush, and glared at the steaming fish.

"Have you thought of all you can say about what I'm eatin'?" he inquired balefully.

"All but this; the man that eats hot mush for breakfast is a fool," retorted the stimulated gentleman across the table, not liking the challenge in the cap'n's eyes.

"Incog!" whispered the apprehensive judge.

But the talismanic word no longer had its effect on the raging temper of his companion.

"Havin' heard what you've had to say about my mush, I'll inform you that any man who calls for stinkin' fish, and eats it under the noses of decent people, is a direct descendant of the first hyena that buried a carcass till it got flavored up enough to suit. You are a——"

The inebriated gentleman opposite, possessing a judgment that was clouded at the moment, tossed his glass of ice water at his critic. Cap'n Sproul ducked, and rose with his bowl clutched in his two hands. He leaned over, and, before the man could dodge, smashed the bowl on his head. The cap'n promptly followed up the attack with all the ammunition in reach—knives, forks, spoons, and miscellaneous tableware that he hurled after the fleeing victim. And the rancor of the long-repressed old seaman was not to be satisfied even with this routing of the enemy. He gave chase. He succeeded in landing a mighty kick just as the man, blinded with the hot mush, was fumbling with the handle of the door that the startled landlord opened from the other side. The man was precipitated into the host's arms, and the two went whirling in a dizzy polka into the office.

"What's all this?" shouted the landlord.

"It's a little friendly chat about what it's best to eat for breakfast," the cap'n informed him, in a tone and with an air that checked the remarks he started to

make. "And I will add that if you let that man back in here till I'm done my breakfast I'll cut him into chops, and make you cook 'em for me!"

He slammed the door, and came back to the table. He stood beside it, propping himself on his knuckles, and scowled on the three faces opposite.

"If there's any gent feels like offerin' any more remarks on what I'm eatin', now is his time," he said.

They stared back at him, recognized the caliber of this savage stranger, and began to eat hurriedly.

When Cap'n Sproul had waited a proper time, he sat down, and plied knife and fork on what remained of his breakfast. It was a silent meal. When it was finished, he followed the judge out, and still the silence was respectful.

They found the landlord busy with a sponge, a basin of hot water, and court-plaster. He was repairing a cut on the forehead of the gentleman who had expressed his feelings so liberally regarding hot mush.

The cap'n glowered on him, picked up his valise, and departed at the heels of the judge whose face masked his feelings, but whose eyes gleamed with significant fires.

"I hope you don't figger that I've done any damage to that incog," ventured the cap'n after they had plodded in silence for some time.

"I want to assure you once again, Mr. Sheriff, that you are a man of resource. I made no mistake when I asked you to accompany me on this trip. We will now enjoy the freshness of this bright spring morning."

His honor looked back at the tavern with satisfaction written large on his features, sniffed at the breeze, and went off at a brisk clip.

"I want to warn you again," said the cap'n, breaking a period of silence, "that I'm a hoodoo to a restful vacation. I've proved it so twice, and now it is startin' in again. You'd better let me go back home. You ain't goin' to get what the doctor prescribed for you if you keep me along."

The judge smiled upon him appreciatively.

"Captain, I don't approve of violence or brawls—as a judge I cannot. But I want to assure you that I had a fillip for my appetite back there at the breakfast table that made up for all I went through last night. This breeze has a brand-new flavor for me."

"Well," admitted his companion, "there's a little more stor'b'ry extract and cream and sugar about it for me, too. As near as I could judge from a quick look that seemed to be a sizable cut he got."

"We'll forget them. It was only an incident that will make the rest of the trip more pleasant by contrast. Why don't you cheer up? Your face isn't in tune with the morning at all, my dear Mr. Sheriff."

"Prob'ly not," said the cap'n, doggedly clinging to his gloom; "but if the things had happened to you that have happened to me when I've started out for rest and relaxation, you wouldn't be startin' out for more rest and relaxation with no hop, skip, and a jump, and three cheers and a tiger. I'm a hoodoo on a vacation. I say it again, and there ain't any use for me to pretend that I ain't."

But the air was crisp, the sun was bright, and his melancholy mood lightened perceptibly as they marched on. The judge was no longer the austere jurist. He was like a boy out for a holiday. He peered over into every field, waved his hand at toiling farmers, and hummed snatches of song in a queer falsetto that the cap'n, in his thoughts, likened to the "squeaking of a boom taakul."

The judge stood treat for a bowl of bread and milk at a farmhouse before they had progressed far on their way. He pleaded that the tavern breakfast had consisted more of excitement than of food.

Then they walked on a bit farther, and sat down under the shade of a roadside maple, leaning their backs against a stone wall.

"Now," exclaimed the judge when their pipes were alight, "isn't this peace and comfort, after all?"

"It is, accordin' to all appearances,"

acknowledged the cap'n; "but you have to take into account that appearances is sometimes deceitful."

"Now, my dear sir, I don't like this eternal looking on the dark side," protested his companion, the tartness of his judicial nature showing up. "You'll spoil our vacation if you keep on that way."

"You can reckon on me to spoil any kind of a vacation. I ain't the vacation kind."

"But aren't you enjoying this present moment here in this peace and under this tree? How can you help enjoying it?"

"I'm havin' a good time right now, if that's what you mean. But I've been a seafarin' man for most of my life, and seafarin' men are allus lookin' ahead to what weather is comin' instead of takin' time to relish what weather they've got on tap right at the present moment. It's an unfort'nit' disposition to have; but it's what comes of goin' to sea and bein' on the lookout all the time."

"Well, I must say it is an unfortunate disposition; as if anything but the very best could happen to us here in this quiet landscape, with the sun shining brightly and all nature serene! You'd ought to consult the physician that prescribed for me, Mr. Sheriff. I think your liver must be seriously out of order."

"When things is all quiet and peaceful they don't fool me, not for a minute," declared the cap'n, hanging to his dogma. "You take me the way I was when I started out last summer. I went and hired an old, abandoned schooner that was anchored in a puddle of a harbor down longshore, and proposed to set aboard her and rest and relax. And I hadn't been on board her long enough to get my grub unpacked and one pipe smoked, when along came a gang that you wouldn't no more be lookin' for than you'd expect a nightmare to come true, and they shanghaied me for a sailin' master."

"I'll wager it's an interesting yarn," said the judge encouragingly. "Let's have it!"



"Nobody's henderin' you from goin'," said the cap'n, balancing the rocks menacingly.

But even as the cap'n knocked his pipe ashes into his palm, preparatory to beginning his tale, the big surrey swung into sight. He watched its approach grimly. It halted in the highway abreast the wayfarers, and their four persecutors of the tavern sat and glared at them, and muttered among themselves.

Cap'n Sproul arose, and selected rocks from the top of the wall, one for each hand.

"I'd advise you gents to keep your settin' in that wagon," he said, his gaze

principally on the man whose countenance was striped with court-plaster.

"You needn't worry," the man of the court-plaster hastened to assure him. "We ain't hankering for your society, nor for any sports on the green with any such disturbing element as you are. We're headed off to some place where we can get a good night's rest, and not be kept awake by a couple of rowdies."

"Nobody's henderin' you from goin'," said the cap'n, balancing the rocks menacingly. "And if them hosses hold out, I'd advise you to go a long ways."

"Oh, we don't propose to be run off'n the face of the earth by two plug-uglies. We'll go when we like, and where we like. All is, we propose to have a good look at you fellows so that we can warn inquirin' friends that don't want their hotels knocked down. Stubby old goat with chin whiskers and a lanky gander with a face on him like a nicked hatchet! We may get out handbills advertisin' you, like as not! Drive on, Joe. We've got their tag and number."

The big surrey went on. The two under the shade of the maple heard jeering laughter as long as it was in sight.

"This persecution is getting beyond the bounds of endurance," raged his honor. "When two innocent pedestrians cannot wander along the countryside without being subjected to the insults of drunken brutes, it is time to find out what the law can avail."

"I was thinkin' it was about time to unwrap the cotton battin' from around that incog," remarked the cap'n dryly.

"I shall not disclose my identity to be laughed at," insisted the judge.

Cap'n Sproul dropped the rocks he had been holding.

"Let's go home," he advised. "This thing don't seem to be startin' out right.

Or I'll go home and you can send for some one that ain't a hoodoo."

"I'll not give in one jot or tittle to those drunken loafers, sir. They deserve to be made an example of for the protection of others. I shall pursue my own course without regard to them, and if they get in my way again they'll suffer for it. You aren't a coward, Mr. Sheriff. You have shown that. Then come along!"

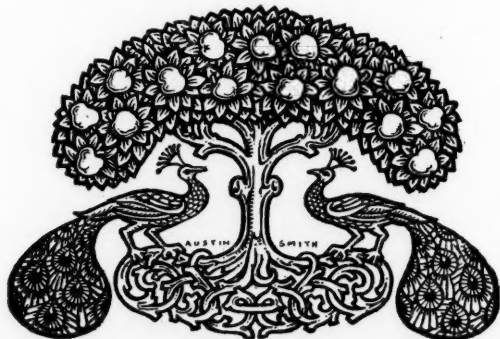
"Puttin' the thing in that light," said the cap'n heartily, "why, I'll come, and glad to. Lookin' at it as you do now, it seems to be more in my line," he added, with baleful significance.

He buttoned his coat, and seemed ready to start off on the run after the surrey. But the judge sat down again, and lighted his pipe.

"It's just as well not to run after trouble, Mr. Sheriff," he said, getting back his poise. "No doubt their talk was only vain threats. That man has good reason to sputter at you. We'll sit here for a time, and get back into tune with nature, and let those wretches get well on their road. Then we'll stroll along. I don't believe we'll ever see them again."

So Cap'n Sproul, as reluctantly as a hound pulled from the scent, lighted his pipe, and resumed his yarn.

(Under the title "The Tinned Mr. Tozier," further incidents of the vacation trip of the judge and the cap'n will be given in the next number of SMITH'S MAGAZINE.)





Hearts and Home

By Edwin L. Sabin

ILLUSTRATED BY F. A. CARTER

THE Merrivals were prosperous. Mr. Merrival had worked hard for his luck—work is the best bait with which to catch it—and in this prosperity was a special satisfaction.

After the brief dilation which had followed upon his marriage and the impetus of home cooking, he was again increasing at the waist. Mrs. Merrival, for the first time, could buy an entire set of furs at once. They both were head-over in automobile literature. Consequently, to signalize their progress, it really was important that they build. They could afford a new house of their own, and a good one, too.

The present little house looked dingy; so did the neighborhood. House and neighborhood had sufficed for the past ten years, but had deteriorated, while they, the Merrivals, had improved. Lately the house had appealed to them as small and old-fashioned; it lacked a billiard room for a den inside, and a garage outside; and what they should have, and were entitled to have now, was a modern, up-to-date house, in a restricted district, where everybody owned, where dogs were controlled, and children were always spick and span, and no stores were allowed. And where there would be all people of—ahem!—their status.

So, by the grace of the property holders already upon the ground, Merrival was permitted to buy two lots in the new district of Highland Heights—where the Johnstons lived. Hodges & Hawkins undertook the plans for the

proposed house. They were the “big” architects of the city, and were accustomed to handling large outlays, but there was no use in scrimping matters. The Johnstons had employed Hodges & Hawkins, and were sorry that they had not builded better while they were at it.

The Merrival new house was to be nine rooms; the present house was only six. Nine rooms, two stories, with full basement completely finished, oak floors, quarter-sawed oak woodwork, waxed, beamed ceilings downstairs, tiled, sanitary kitchen, hot-water heat—of course—screen porches—of course—garage—of course—et cetera, et cetera.

Discussion over the plans temporarily eclipsed discussion over various automobiles, on paper. Mr. Merrival's particular care was the basement.

“I want to be done with low, dark basements,” he declared. “I want to be able to move about without ducking my head until I have a stiff neck, or else ramming furnace pipes and mowing down cobwebs. I want a basement that can be kept as clean as a bedroom.”

Mrs. Merrival focused upon the kitchen—which should be tiled, like a bathroom, and in two divisions, with the stove in the one, and the table, sink, and all in the other, separated therefrom. She had read of such a scheme, and it struck her hard. She complained that the present kitchen was stuffy, and also too large and inconvenient.

The Merrivals acknowledged that

they were fussy, and they felt that Mr. Hodges, who was designing the house, bore their visitations with the patience of a diplomat. However, finally everything had apparently been squeezed in, and the formidable list of extras was disposed of; and on this, Tuesday, evening Merrival, arrived at the little, six-room place on ordinary Robson Street, could announce, as if gratified:

"Well, dear, I O.K.'d the plans, and the contracts will be let a week from to-morrow. That's soon enough, isn't it?"

"Oh, yes, I should think so," responded Mrs. Merrival. "Then all is settled, I suppose?"

Somehow, she had answered him with less enthusiasm than he had hoped for. He wanted to be enthusiastic himself, to stay enthusiastic, for he was enthusiastic—very. They were going out of this old house into a new—hurrah! Out of this common locality into a swell one—hurrah!

"All settled. I should think we'd be in in three months. Hodges says so. I must see Davis to-morrow, and tell him I can't renew our lease here, but that I'll rent from month to month until we move. He'll not object, and he ought to know."

"Perhaps that would be only right," admitted his wife. "He has been a good landlord."

"And this has been a good house," commented Merrival magnanimously. It seemed to him that he owed the place at least this acknowledgment, since they were to desert it. "I rode up on the car with Jenkins to-night. I told him we were to move, and he seemed right cut up over it. He says they'll have to see lots more of us before we go. I assured him, 'of course.'"

The Jenkinsons lived next door. Mr. Jenkins was only a clerk in a wholesale house downtown, but he was a hearty, genuine little man, and he and Merrival had chummed over their furnaces and their gardens quite a bit.

"Mrs. Lewis was the same way. I thought I'd tell her this morning when she was over. Why, she almost cried! Said that she and Mr. Lewis enjoyed

us so much, and had considered us fixtures. She insists on our coming to dinner right away."

The Lewises lived across the street, in the north half of the double house there; the north half was two dollars and fifty cents cheaper a month, but the Lewises were pleasant people, notwithstanding.

"They'll all see enough of us. It isn't as though we were moving to-morrow," prompted Merrival. "Yes, this has been a good house, and we've had good neighbors," he added. And he added again boldly: "I don't believe you want to go, after all."

Mrs. Merrival slightly flushed under the accusation, but she met his eyes, and gave him look for look.

"Certainly I do! I don't believe you do, though. I've suspected it all along. Now, do you?"

"Of course! O.K.'d the plans, told Hodges to go ahead, and let the bids; shall notify the landlord to-morrow," he reminded gayly. "So there's no backing out by me."

"By me, either," she retorted. "The new house all our own will be splendid."

"Sure!" he agreed.

And it would. He intended his tone to be genuine and strong; but now ensued an awkward little silence, which it failed to bridge. He was uncomfortably impressed by the sensation that the present house had heard their words and was stung thereby. He spoke quickly:

"Don't we need a grate fire? It's cloudy and damp outside to-night."

She was equally quick:

"Yes—let's."

He omitted to turn the electric switch, as he went down into the basement for fuel. But that did not matter. He could find a pin in this basement in the dark. He knew every inch, and where every article was. For had he not tinkered, tinkered, through the years—driving in nails on which to hang ax, and hatchet, and coal shovel, and furnace poker, rake, and hoe, and spade, and garden fork; putting up shelves, convenient, and cleats upon which to suspend the hose; making over the coal

bin by sealing the cracks with wood and paper, so that no dust should leak out; sealing, also, the cold-air shaft of the furnace, so that no dust should leak in; pottering, and pottering, until, by Jove, that basement might not *look* specially well, but it was as handy as an old pair of slippers. It was his basement; he was the proprietor.

As he descended, the pleasant, friendly odor of pine greeted him from his prize supply of kindling—his share in

arrive neatly assorted and tied. That was the way the Johnstons got it—and, according to them, it cost about ten cents an inch! As a newcomer, he would, of course, have to be even more circumspect than the older residents.

He bore a basketful and an armful together upstairs, and dumped them upon the hearth. It was not necessary to be careful with the dumping. The old-fashioned bricks of the hearth were worn—mellowed, they were, rather—



Jenkins and Merrival had chummed over their furnaces and their gardens quite a bit.

a lot of boxes and maple-tree trimmings which he and Jenkins had employed an expressman to haul for them. Now, sawed and split, the stuff made a fine heap in a corner of the basement. It was bully for the grate, and the laundry stove, and for the furnace; and he was proud of that wood, procured for practically nothing, and rendered down by his own hands.

But in the new house such a mess would be bizarre. Think of having an expressman dump old boxes and tree trimmings upon one's back lawn in a restricted district! Kindling there would

by countless previous dumpings, and could not be harmed. This was another pleasure of life: to feel that the furnishings in the house were harm-proof—made immune, that is, to ordinary wear, through constant vaccination by the same.

He built a grand fire in the grate. It was a peculiar grate. If you opened it too widely at the bottom, it smoked; if you closed the damper at the throat too far, there was smoke. But by precisely right adjustment, establishing precisely the correct relation between the draft at the bottom and the draft

at the top, a minimum of smoke and a maximum of heat was obtained. Through much experience, Merrival had determined the exact ratio of draft and escape, and he flattered himself that from the grate he always got full value.

He exchanged business coat for house jacket, taking down the one, and hanging up the other on the same hook in the hall closet. Really a convenient thing was that hall closet, where any time he could find overcoat, raincoat, rubbers, umbrella, hat, cap, et cetera; and Elsa her outdoor raiment as miscellaneous. A hall closet had been strenuously tabooed for the new house; there was to be no hall, and a closet in the long living room could not be arranged. It was out of date, had claimed both Hodges and Hawkins. Also, the Johnstons.

Coming down from washing his hands in the bathroom, he paused, just for an instant, at the turn of the stairs to indulge, as often he did, in a quiet glow of gratification. The lights had been snapped on, and Elsa was sitting, in her accustomed chair, by the magazine-piled table before the leaping fire, embroidering. She, the lights, the fire, the rug, the couch cover, the pictures on the wall—all harmonized, all filled their proper place. It was a cozy interior; it surely was!

And thus evenings were pretty certain to find them, she on that side the table, he upon this. For they were somewhat foggyish. The fact was, that close scrutiny would reveal two worn spots in the rug, where her slippers rested, and where his rested.

In the new house there must be a new rug, to fit the new living room. They would sit on the new rug, and on new spots. He was fond of these worn spots; there was a solid satisfaction in the domestic routine which admitted of his coming home, laying hand without a miss upon his house coat on the closet hook, washing, if he chose, in the dark, or semidark, upstairs, and descending to view Elsa in her own place, with her feet upon her own spot, to settle, as expected, in his own place over his own spot.

But these sentimental qualms in which

he was all of a sudden indulging were foolish. What was the matter with him, anyway? The new house was to be fine and dandy, and he and Elsa would be very comfortable—yes, and cozy—there, as soon as they were accustomed to things. At any rate, he must not let her suspect his silly wavering. She wanted to go.

It was odd how quickly the word of their prospective leaving spread. The next morning the conductor with the two service stars on his sleeve said, as he collected Mr. Merrival's fare on the car:

"I hear you're going to move out the neighborhood, Mr. Merrival."

"Yes," said Merrival. "We're going to build."

"Highland Heights?"

"Highland Heights."

"Well, that's a fine part of town; but you'll miss us. You've been on this run about as long as I have, I guess."

"Shouldn't wonder," responded Merrival. "But we're getting uneasy; house seems small, and we thought we'd build a bigger one over in the Heights."

"You're likely to have your own car then. All those folks do, don't they?" suggested the conductor wisely.

"Yes, a machine is the proper caper for the Heights," laughed Merrival.

"I've been wanting to build for quite a while, now, myself," volunteered the conductor, preparing to pass on. "But we hate to move. Where we are is home to us, you know. Kids have been brought up there—and all that."

And he did pass on.

Robson Street was a populous street, even a noisy street, and sometimes it had presented itself to Merrival as being a disagreeable street. But this evening, as he walked from the car, it welcomed him with a homely, but honest, welcome. He knew every tree along it, and every dog; he could mark the progress of the lawns, and of the children. The Dodds' youngster—dirty, as usual—dragging a shingle tied to a string, vouchsafed him a bold "Hello!" and the Willard little girl, with lowered, shy eyes, responded to his inviting "How do you do?" He felt that he

was in his own country. No matter how far afield his business day might take him, when he got off the car at Robson Street he was back on the home range, where no one would question his face.

His wife was waiting for him on the steps of their front porch. He could see her as he approached. This was another nice thing about that house: the front porch was built out a little farther than other front porches, it seemed, and when Elsa was waiting for him upon the steps he could descry her from a block down. How many, many evenings she had been waiting for him just this way.

"Mrs. Rogers wants our rhubarb if we don't take it with us," she informed. "I told her I didn't suppose there would be much space for a garden in the new yard."

"Not on two twenty-five-foot lots, with a nine-room mission-style house and a garage. You'd better let her have it. And I'll give Jenkins the asparagus."

Speaking of these things so long beforehand struck Merrival with a curious sense of indecorousness, as if the garden was dying, and they were already disposing of its effects. It had been a faithful garden, with its various plots assigned to their especial vegetables, which, in the soil thus best adapted to them, flourished, as everybody agreed, amazingly. But Merrival resolutely shut out the picture of the abandoned garden, and continued, with zest:

"It will be a change not to have a garden, and to have all lawn, instead. We can buy vegetables cheaper than we can raise them."

"Yes," responded Elsa, likewise with zest, "gardens always are more bother than they're worth. Just lawn will be lovely. And only this very afternoon I was thinking, when the Adams' barking dog was out, and driving me almost distracted, how grand it will seem to be off this noisy old street, with its children and dogs, and to be in a quiet, refined neighborhood like the Heights."

"I should say! And in a new house of our own, with light, airy basement——"

"And with modern, airy kitchen——"

"And everything."

"And everything."

It was most pleasant to be so in accord. Then and there, Merrival decided that Elsa never, never should suspect. Any temporary backsliding on his part he would keep to himself. He would put no fly in her ointment. She was speaking as they entered the house: "The kitchen sink is loose from the wall again, dear. Can't you fix it?"

Fix it? Certainly! It was always coming loose, but all that it required was a little piece of wood, a sliver of exactly the right thickness, delicately inserted in exactly the right place, behind, to wedge it. Some folks would have summoned a plumber—but not he. In this house he was plumber, carpenter, electrician, glazier. He knew the house as an engineer knows his favorite locomotive, and he was competent to treat every recurring whim. He was rather of a stickler at keeping a place up; and not for nothing had he and this house lived together through ten years of intimacy.

So he fixed again the sink; also the doorbell, which, by one of those doorbell fits, as sudden and as inexplicable as a cold in the nose, was refusing to ring. But he understood this doorbell; understood it perfectly. Whether he would understand a doorbell of Highland Heights was a question. The Johnstons always had an electrician come out and fix theirs.

That night the Jenkinses were over for cards. This was but another evidence of that quickening which the prospective change had brought about. Weekly tilts at cards with the Jenkinses had been quite the regular program until interrupted this past winter; and now the Jenkinses proposed that the series be finished.

"But we'll see you often after we move," reminded Mrs. Merrival. "And we aren't going for three months—maybe longer."

"Three months will slip away before you know it," declared Mr. Jenkins. "Especially after you get to bossing the house as it goes up. And when once



He paused, just for an instant, at the turn of the stairs.

you're located in the Heights, you won't remember that Robson Street exists!"

"Oh, you needn't think you can get rid of us so easy as that," retorted Merrival.

"No, indeed. We'll want to hear all the news as it happens," concurred his wife.

Mrs. Jenkins, a shrewd little woman, shrewdly eyed her over the hand of cards.

"I don't believe that either of you want to go, at all," she accused. "I told Mrs. Merrival that, and she won't admit; but she says that it's Mr. Merrival who doesn't want to go."

"The idea!" scoffed Mrs. Merrival.

"Can't prove it on *me*," defended

Mr. Merrival. "We hate to leave our friends, and all, but we're in for a change. We've lived here ten years, and that's enough. Anyway, it's too late now."

"Yes, it's too late now," chimed in his wife; and they both played on with feverish earnestness.

"Those certainly are very pleasant people," commented Mr. Merrival, in generous mood, that night after the Jenkinses' departure. "We'll miss them, I'm afraid."

"But there'll be the Johnstons, and others whom we shall meet," prompted his wife.

"Yes, of course," he agreed.

He wished that he might shake off

his sentimental depression. He assured himself that Robson Street was ordinary, congested, and noisy; that the Jenkinses were merely plain, common persons, really below their—the Merrivals'—plane, and of a type to be met anywhere; and that the present house was old, and somewhat shabby, and too small—in fact, lacking in many ways. Then, why these foolish compunctions about bettering conditions? Pshaw! But, despite such assurances, Merrival lay awake after turning in, which was, for him, a condition most unusual.

In its silence the house seemed a living thing, brooding reproachfully. Through ten years it had stood by him and Elsa. It had been partner in their honeymoon joys; it had shared in their hopes, their disappointments, their sorrows, their steadfast love, their mutual-ity in every phase of wedded life; in their ambitions, their work, their play, their successes. He had fussed with it, she had fussed with it, in her woman's way, and it had lent itself to their adaptation. Their hands had touched, their feet had trodden, their eyes had surveyed, every inch of it again, and again, and again, and again. It was a part of themselves—and they had made it so. And now, in their prosperity, they were repudiating it, and consigning it to strangers, just as they were also putting their trust in strangers.

However—and with masculine brusqueness, Merrival turned upon his other side, determined to rid himself of the obsession by sleep. The clock struck twelve. Humph! As if aroused by the striking, Elsa—in her bed across the room from his—stirred. She had been asleep, by her heavy breathing, and he spoke to her:

"You awake, dear?"

"Why—yes."

"What's the matter? Can't you go to sleep again?"

"Yes. I was just thinking a moment, that's all."

"What about?"

"Oh, nothing, except that we ought to have the kitchen painted, even if we do it ourselves. I'd like it white this time—or nearly white."

"But what kitchen?" He was startled.

"Our kitchen, of course! It really needs painting badly."

"But not if we're going to move out!"

"Oh!"

There was this explosive, deprecating little exclamation, and a silence. Through the silence began to trickle a spasmodic, suspicious sound from Elsa's bed; and, abruptly arising, Merrival, with ruthless, but anxious hand, flashed on the light—and flashed it off again. He had guessed; Elsa was crying. So he crossed over, and sat upon the edge of her bed.

"What is it, dear?"

"I—don't—know."

"Are you sick?" Man's customary question.

"No-o."

"Don't you like the new kitchen where we're going?"

"Y-yes."

He had an inspiration.

"Don't you want to go?"

This she parried, making confession adroitly.

"You do, though, don't you?" she replied.

"I sort of hate to, after all."

She caught at it, sobbing afresh.

"I don't want to! It has come over me all of a sudden. But I will! I'm only silly for a minute, Dick. When I woke up I was planning about the kitchen in this house. That's all. I'd forgotten. Now I'll grow used to the idea again."

Stroking her hair, he revealed his secret farther:

"I feel the same way. I hate to go, like sin. I hate to leave this place. It seems as though we were cutting loose from everything we've done and everybody we know."

"I thought you wanted to go!"

"I thought *you* wanted to go."

"I love this house and this yard—and this locality, too!" she confessed. "But we can't stay now," she added disconsolately.

"Why not?"

"It's too late."

"No, it isn't," he denied confidently. "The bids aren't let, and I'll get rid of the plans. But can you get along with the old kitchen?"

"Of course! Can you get along with the basement?"

"Sure! I've got that basement just about as I want it."

"W-well—if we *can* stay," she pleaded. She held his hand against her cheek, caressing it. "It—it's home, Dick. Some way, it's home. We'd never feel homey in any other place."

"Yes, it's home," he said; and they both sighed happily. A heavy weight had been lifted.

The next evening Merrival strode buoyantly along familiar, amicable Robson Street, from car to house; and at the front steps his beaming face was instantly reflected by that of his wife.

"I've arranged everything bully," he reported. "Davis says he will sell, and we'll buy this place. It's well built. It won't need much repairing, and we can add another room or two, and more porch. You'll want something done to your kitchen."

"Not a great deal. It's a splendid kitchen, just as it is. But you'll want the basement made over."

"Don't think so! I've made it over to suit, already. And we can rent that shed next door for a garage—can put up a cement garage there if we choose."

"And keep our garden."

"And keep our garden."

"And I won't have to give away my rhubarb! But what about the architects' plans, and those lots, Dick?"

Mrs. Merrival looked anxious again.

"That's the best news. The Johnstons will take the lots and the plans. They can sell their own place to friends, and they'll move onto our place when the house is done. They like it better. They're tired of the house they built, Johnston says, but they're stuck on ours."

"Well," purred Mrs. Merrival contentedly, as, arm about waist, they passed through the doorway into the smiling hall, "that is the way with some people. But we aren't movers, are we, Dick? We appreciate home, I guess; and home isn't made by the architects. We make it."



A Spring Fancy

BY every road and bubbling brook
The violets bud and blow,
And every bank is blue with flowers
That once was white with snow.
They nestle in the velvet moss,
Among their broad green leaves,
And hide beneath the leafy cloak
That Creeping Charlie weaves.

To tint their petals satin soft,
The sapphire lent its hue,
And every tiny blossom bears
A drop of glistening dew;
A mirror holding in its heart
The azure of the skies,
For lo! The wild wood violets
Are Spring's unclosing eyes.

MINNA IRVING.



ILLUSTRATED BY FANNY M. TAYLOR

THERE has been a sweeping change in the method of buying hats during the last few years. Possibly the shops have more to do with this than the individual or the fashions. Time was when the choice and purchase of the one hat was an important thing. Women deliberated over it several days, bought it when the weather demanded it, and paid what they could afford for it; it had to last many weeks and give good service. To offset it, one bought a plain hat that was to do duty during the strenuous hours. Those were the days in which one had a best gown, a best frock, and a best hat, and wore them when the occasion demanded.

The shops, however, began that strictly American method of offering hosts of new things every other week at small prices to tempt the buyers. It was not good for commerce that a woman should make a choice of one hat and wear it through the season; the merchants wished her to buy a half dozen, and to this end they lured her with cheap, ready-made articles which they guaranteed for style, but not for endurance. It was the shops that projected the new doctrine in hats; not to look for materials that would last forever; not to buy shapes that would do in October as well as in June; and to pay less money for each hat and therefore ac-

quire many to suit different costumes, and to represent each passing style.

This method was so persistently beaten into the heads of the public as the right one that it has won out. One can still pay as much for a hat as for a gown, and it is quite true that hats are more expensive now than they have been since jewels were worn for a head covering. But it is also true that the style and fashions of these hats are ably copied in other hats that sell for less than five dollars, and which are not only worn by those in moderate circumstances, but by the millionaires. It has become the fashion to have many hats; and every class of buyers yields to it in one way or another.

Because of this change the invention of new hats has gone on unceasingly. No one style has led the way. Half a dozen have been fashionable at once, with another dozen on the side as good examples of what might be the fashion later on. The opening of the spring millinery season showed no change from this idea. Hats, large and small, were offered to the buyers, and each one was said to be at the height of fashion; and this is true. There is a wide diversity in shapes, in trimmings, and in materials in all the fashionable hats, which should be grateful news to the majority of women. It gives every one a chance to look her best; to get a hat



An attractive frock for summer wear. It is made of wistaria marquisette, trimmed with medallions of lace and embroidered in self color. The skirt is the newest tunic effect, and falls gracefully all around. The bottom of the skirt and shoulder pieces are of finely tucked marquisette. The white straw hat has around it a soft fold of wistaria chiffon, and a pink rose at the side.



A delicate evening gown of white chiffon. The sash with butterfly bow in the back is of pink satin. The band just below the knee is also of pink satin; the tunic falls over it and is caught on the side with pink roses and a bow of the satin. The neck, sleeves and bottom of the skirt are finished with pointed lace.



A summer gown of dainty color effect. The skirt and bodice are of white linen. Around the bottom of the skirt is a band of blue linen, two narrow bands running up the front, these latter being finished at the ends by heavy embroidery in blue. The effect of the blue bands is heightened by white French knots. The embroidery that trims the gown is made up of blue French knots.

that fits her head, that suits her style, and that goes with her gowns. She need no longer be guided by what her neighbor wears.

This season has brought back the large crown in the same dimensions with which we are now familiar. There was a slight promise that crowns would be smaller this spring, but it was evidently a prophecy without honor. The milliners never had an idea of bringing back into favor the hats that showed the hair, as has been well proved during the last few days.

The absolutely large crown is here again, as well as the moderate one. Every woman knows that this does not mean the crown which is large on the outside only, but the one that has a wide circle inside. In a few of the hats one sees coronets which are placed at the edge of the crown, on the inside, to prevent it from going down too far over the face. These are merely basted in, and are used only at the wish of the wearer. The milliners still persuade every one to go without the coronet, and allow the hat to actually cover the head. There is no thought of a bandeau, although many of the new hats show a decided roll at the left side which lets one have a glimpse of the hair. Mind you, this glimpse is only obtained when the hair is worn in the new fashion, which is down over the ears, in a loose, graceful manner that has nothing in common with the stiff, ugly style of our grandmothers.

The woman who likes a small hat in the evening can choose one of the new soft turbans fashioned after the Indian manner, and for morning she can wear the largest hat she owns trimmed with flowers or ribbon bows. Velvet, striped satin ribbon, spring flowers, pansies, and small feather fantasies with the Chantecler colors are among the best trimmings; and the extra soft straw in vivid colors, especially in stripes, is the favorite foundation material.

Whatever else one does this summer, one must be sure to wear a well-chosen hat with even the simplest costume. This is the reason why every one chooses many hats while they are cheap.

It is no longer considered necessary to have a hat last through the season. It is considered a much better plan to let one follow the other, each one representing a new phase of fashion.

It may be interesting to many to hear a bit more about this new coiffure which has not been heralded by a banner, but has crept into fashion in a mouselike way. The hair is lifted from the brow, but gives little sign of a pompadour, and is without parting. It is divided into three parts in front, the middle part drawn loosely back to the crown of the head, and the two sides dropped over the ears and caught just above the nape of the neck. The hair must be waved or curled in some manner. It is not attractive worn this way when perfectly straight. It must not be plastered down over the ears or give any appearance of flatness; its waves are merely adjusted with the hand or a hairpin to conceal the ears, and then ripple away to the back of the head.

The long hair is arranged into a Psyche puff with a slight swirl around it. This is caught down with two shell pins for day hours and with two ornamental ones for the evening.

This is the coiffure which has taken the place of the mass of false curls and puffs worn at the crown of the head, and tied around with a ribbon. The ribbon itself has not quite gone out of fashion, for it is used in the evening as a fillet. It is excessively soft, made of satin or gauze, and twisted loosely around the hair, from forehead to nape of neck, in the Grecian way. It would be best for a girl to be certain that it is becoming to her before she wears it. It is apt to harden and flatten the majority of faces.

Simplicity is the aim in good hair-dressing now, and the girl who has indulged in an immense roll and quantities of puffs should discard them all, and come into the ranks of those who are considered better dressed than usual because they adopt a simple coiffure; it may have some artificial hair about it, but its appearance is successfully concealed instead of flagrantly revealed. This small coiffure is entirely suited to

the needs of the spring hat which must slip on over the head without hindrance from the hair. It must cover the locks with the exception of the part over the ears, and many of the hats show little of that.

But that is enough on the subject of the head. Coiffures and hats are interesting, but there are too many things to talk about to give them more space. There are all the new gowns to be considered, and the attractive long wraps, the smart new pumps, the high-waisted linen skirts with the peasant blouses of batiste in the same color as the skirt, trimmed with stripes or polka dots. There are new white marquissette and voile blouses with the introduction of brilliant colors, as in sailor collars and cuffs, and as box plaits down the front; these are in a large variety of colors, as green, blue, yellow, black, and purple chiffon cloth, with the hemstitched edges. And there are a host of other things that the warm weather has brought into fashion and usage.

Among the new ventures, for instance, is the popular use of black satin for street suits as well as one-piece frocks. Some of this material has a wool back, but the majority of it is just the satin we know so well. It is not meteor or messaline or charmeuse; these three weaves are kept for elaborate gowns. This satin, which is used for coat suits, is rather heavy, and wears very well, so they say. There was a time when we tried to keep it and velvet for ceremonial occasions, but things are topsy-turvy now, and we have reduced satin to the rival of linen and serge.

Those who have worn the first suits of it declare the venture to be most successful. They say the fabric is cool, does not wrinkle as much as linen, need not be washed, and is always ready to wear. It serves for shopping, and yet one feels well dressed in it for a luncheon, an afternoon tea, or a card party. These suits are made on a strictly American fashion if they are to serve for every day. The skirt is narrow, cut in four gores, sometimes with a box plait down the back, and always quite

short. These features may be exaggerated by a woman who wants to call attention to herself, but they can also be kept within a dignified limit by the woman who wants to dress well and not conspicuously.

The coat is a square sacque affair which follows the lines of a man's business coat. It is cut off at the hips, has straight under-arm seams, a one-piece back, and many pockets. The sleeves are small and long, there are no cuffs, and the revers are strictly mannish. If you want to picture a well-dressed woman, think of this suit in black satin, with which is worn a white batiste shirt waist without lace or embroidery, with a high collar and frill of the material, the latter edged with a picot point of Irish or Cluny, black stockings, and black pumps with flat ribbon bows, a moderate size sailor hat of purple or pink or white straw, trimmed with black satin ribbon, a pair of wash chamois gloves. A woman in such a costume could go anywhere during the hours of nine in the morning and six in the evening.

Such suits are also made up in blue, in smoke brown, and gray, in bronze, and in soft shades of dark green. Purple ones are in fashion, but I should advise nearly every one to avoid them. They are only for the woman who has many clothes and wide social opportunities. Purple is a color that cannot be worn every day. Especially the new papal purple which is so glaring and intense. It is attractive in a hat that is to be worn with a gown of another color, and it is also good in spots. For instance, purple stockings, cravat, and a hat band go exceedingly well with a white linen skirt and thin blouse at any summer resort.

Another fabric, like satin, that will be in the height of fashion this summer is a gray and *écru*, and a white and black, striped serge. This is a return to a fashion that but recently left us. Yet it is attractive enough to remain with us for several seasons. These suits are made up in the mannish fashion, and have collars and cuffs of black satin or velvet. One sees a good many Eton



Two simple summer gowns for seaside or mountain wear. The gown at the left is of linen, the ground color being a neutral tint, and the checks of a soft, harmonizing color. The heavy embroidery at the neck, waist and sleeves is of the same color as the gown, with pipings of black. The pocket effect is produced by the same embroidery. The buttons are of black.

The gown at the right is of striped linen, the effect being heightened by a girdle of black velvet. The ornamental bands are made of the same material as the gown, braided.

jackets in them, for this little garment has really returned to favor. It does not fit into the waist as it once did, for that would be against the laws of this season's clothes, but it is very attractive and snappy with its square set over the waistline and its two-inch turnover cuff at the hem of satin or velvet.

There is nothing strictly new about

the striped serge as there is about the satin coat suit, but it will probably strike the fancy of the majority as most suitable for everyday wear. Its greatest handicap is its ability to soil before it has given any service. And as it has to be cleansed by a professional, one does not always feel that it is an economical purchase. It does very well at



1. Novel design for lingerie waist. It is of white lawn, embroidered in pink dots, and has a piping of pink. The bottom of the waist is hemstitched and worn on the outside of the skirt.

2. Simple and attractive waist of blue chifon cloth, the only trimming being a deep pointed collar and cuffs of white chifon, hemstitched. The collar is narrow in the back and is newer than the sailor collar. Hat of blue chip with band of black velvet and roses.

3. Novel shape of rough straw with bright red rosette on the side.

4. Smart hat with band and quills of green velvet.

summer resorts or for country life, but it refuses to remain unspotted for two weeks at a time in the city streets.

Between these two fabrics there is another one that is gaining popularity. It is plain, unspotted, unfigured foulard in dark colors. It is made into everyday coat suits instead of elaborate afternoon gowns, as was once the fashion. It is delightfully cool, does not wrinkle like satin, and is newer than serge.

One of the admirable models in blue has a scanty skirt with a wide box plait down middle of front and back, with a three-inch hem of blue-and-white stripes. The square coat has two pockets on each hip, and two small ones at the bust. It also has a three-inch hem of stripes, and a wide sailor collar to match. The sleeves are three-quarter length, rather small, with three-inch turn-over cuffs of the blue and white. The single-breasted fronts are fastened with round black satin buttons. This is worn over a blouse of white-striped marquisette, which has a V-shaped neck made



Smart tailored suit of black and white striped serge. The Eton jacket has cuffs and revers of black satin. The hat is of rough straw with a smart little bow of black in front.

from German Valenciennes lace. A hat of blue straw trimmed with blue-and-white-striped ribbon would go immensely well with such a costume, and the dark color and light weight of the suit would make it serviceable for traveling especially, and for all the other busy hours.

The long, artistic wraps which will be worn during the warm-weather season need a chapter all to themselves, for they are so varied and remarkable in every way. They will not serve as great a need, to my thinking, in the summer as in the winter, for our climate does not allow us to add any extra garment to what is necessary. But for those who are not going to stand the summer in the heated zone, these wraps are alluring and may become necessary. They are of foulard, of satin, of thin, white wool, of polo cloth, and some of marquisette. They do not differ much in style and shape from those of the winter, but they show much ingenuity and cleverness in their drapery and trimmings.

As to the new blouses, they cannot fail to elicit admiration from those who have always believed that simplicity in dress was the best method. When a blouse which is intended for the busy hours of the day is fairly dripping with imitation Irish, Cluny, embroidery, and Valenciennes lace—you must admit many of them are—no one who has a sense of fitness can approve of it. Their over trimming is the fault of the Amer-

icans who are constantly in touch with the best in clothes. It is far better to fail on the side of severity.

The bringing into fashion, therefore, of the exquisitely simple shirt waist of thin material, without embroidery or lace, is acceptable to all those who want to dress well. The new ones are of marquisette, voile, batiste, French nainsook, and dotted swiss. They are cut on the peasant pattern, but the strictly peasant sleeve is made longer by another sleeve which is slightly full and which is joined to it above the elbow under a cord. This is a novel touch, and is very much liked. Other blouses have the regulation armhole without the shoulder seam, and the sleeves, which are of any length, are put in the armhole with the fewest possible gathers. There is no elevation of the sleeve itself above the shoulder line; that is, the sleeve is cut to lie flat against the arm, and not rise above it as it used to do. If your old shirt waists have this defect, be sure to rip out the tops of their sleeves, cut off that extra length, and smooth the sleeves flatly into the armholes.

This simple blouse is fastened in front with linen or crochet buttons, may be trimmed with a touch of color, and is finished with a frill at the side which is of the same material, outlined with a bit of lace. No one who can help it will wear a boned stock this summer. The stockless blouse is at the top of fashion.



The Value of Philosophy

PHILOSOPHY—thou moon of Reason's sun—
What worth art thou to one at Death's dark door?
Since man must know thee, when his day is done,
A light behind, which casts but shade before!

CHARLES C. JONES.



FLOWER FORBIDDEN

BY
A.M. & C.N. Williamson

ILLUSTRATED BY SIGURD SCHOU

[The first installment of this story appeared in the April number.]

CHAPTER XII.

THE MOORISH BATH—AND AFTER.

THE most important "hammam" frequented by aristocratic Arab women being in old Tunis, El Khadra's carriage, driven by Miloud in place of the coachman, had not very far to go. Nouna accompanied the bride elect and the bride's sister; and Lalla Aïssa having been left at home, there was little risk in hurrying through the ceremonies, and ordering the carriage to return comparatively early. The only real danger, the sisters believed, was threatened by the presence of several friends of the family, invited days ago to watch the ceremonious dyeing of Ourïeda's hair, and the staining of her fingers with henna. These ladies would be surprised at the girls' haste to start for home, and might later mention it to Aunt Aïssa, who would demand why, as they had left the baths early, they had not come home till late.

Luckily for the sisters, however, the day, which had begun with warmth and sunshine, turned cold and windy toward afternoon, threatening one of Tunis' rare, fierce storms. Arab women dislike cold, and fear it, especially after the warmth of the rooms in a Moorish

bath; therefore all who had been invited sent excuses by their servants, with little gifts of perfumes, flowers, and spangled sweets to Ourïeda, things which they had meant to bring.

The building was domed, almost like a mosque, but was entered from a fine, tiled doorway, through a long, low-ceilinged hall. Even there, the heat began to be intense, and damp, as in a greenhouse. The two girls went in together, escorted by their negress, who also wore a veil, not because she was young and beautiful, but because she would not admit to herself that she had passed the happy age, the flower of Mussulman womanhood, when veiling is obligatory. At the end of the hall, a door was thrown open for them by a bath attendant, a plump girl, dressed only in a short robe of gauzy, yellow material, which clung to her warm body and golden-bronze limbs. She welcomed them, smiling respectfully, for the daughters of El Khadra—whose sister Aïssa had hired the baths—were young ladies of importance.

On ordinary days, the inner rooms would have been filled with bathers, pretty or plain, lightly but brilliantly clad, like gauzy butterflies; reclining on divans, or squatting on *nattes* spread

on the marble floor; gossiping together before their turn for the hottest rooms, or sipping ices, French sirups, or Moorish coffee, after the bath. To-day, however, the whole place belonged to the family of El Khadra. Many attendants, draped in mere outlines of yellow, green, or rose, trooped to welcome the girls with smiling respect, as, having been undressed and wrapped in filmy white silk robes brought by Nouna, they advanced along a labyrinth of tiled passages and small rooms, to a large one with a plashing fountain in the middle.

Here it was very hot, and steam floated like a pink cloud over the fountain, taking its tint from a few rose-shaded lamps, and the reddish marble walls and floor. The girls were used to the place, however, and did not dislike the heat. Usually, some of these attendants gave them their baths; and so it was to be to-day, for Laila, who was not the heroine of the occasion. But to receive the bride, a distinguished person presented herself; none other than the celebrated woman known to the fiancées of two generations in Tunis as Zakia, "la hennena."

This title meant that she was the expert above all experts in dyeing the hair, staining the fingers, painting the lashes of Arab brides and beauties. She was engaged by those who could afford her coveted services, not only to give this bath in the great bathhouse, but afterward to spend a week in the bride's house, anointing her face and body with scented emollients, tinting her brows and lashes, showing her how to "make up" her complexion for her husband's admiration when, at last, he should be permitted to lift her veil, in his own harem. So it was to be in the case of Ourieda. To-night, Zakia, the "hennena," would sleep under the roof with her, and would remain until the bride went to the bridegroom.

Now she began the ceremony of the bath, complimenting the "little rose" extravagantly upon the glorious beauty of her eyes, her skin, her hair; weaving poetical phrases, and exclaiming upon the joy that would be the great Sidi

Mohammed's when, for the first time, he was permitted to see the face of his bride. But Ourieda did not smile with pleasure, as did most of the young girls Zakia thus flattered. She looked frightened whenever the name of her fiancé was mentioned, and gazed at the preparation of scented pastes and powders with something like disgust.

Finally, when the bath, with all its intricacies, was over, and, fragrant as her name-flower, Ourieda was taken into the cooling room, it was time for the dyeing of her long hair. It had been coiled round her head, to keep it dry, during the bath; but it was slightly damp with the moisture, and fell into lovely waves as Zakia took out the pins, and let it drop over the uncovered shoulders.

The girl owed to her Greek blood the ivory fairness of her complexion, and the color and curl of her beautiful hair. As she sat, despondent, on a low stool, all the paraphernalia of the "hennena," in bowls or platters, ranged round her on the marble pavement, the brown waves covered her like a shining veil, and almost reached the floor.

Zakia picked up the heavy locks, and exclaimed in admiration. Never had she touched such wonderful hair! It would be a pleasure to dye it. Now, she would begin; and the color could dry while she transformed the ivory fingers of the bride to coral.

But suddenly Ourieda rebelled. She remembered how Norah had said that such hair as hers was a glory, and that it was of the rich brown which she and her brother admired most. Then Laila had replied quickly: "Our men like jet-black hair better, and it must be dyed before Ourieda marries."

"What sacrilege!" Norah had ejaculated. And her eyes had turned to the photograph of her brother, on the dressing table; for the girls had been talking in her room, at night, all three brushing their hair. It was as if she had said to the picture: "Isn't it a shame that the poor child's beauty has to be spoiled?" And the eyes of the "dream man" had seemed to Ourieda to answer: "Yes."

The girl put up her hands impul-

sively now, with this memory fresh in her mind.

"I won't have it done!" she exclaimed. "My hair shan't be black. I like it as it is. I hate artificial things."

Zakia, the "hennena," looked aghast, almost dropping the bowl of dye which she held—a mixture called *sabgha* by the Arabs, made of antimony mingled with charcoal of pinewood, and *clous de girafle*.

"But," the woman stammered, "it must be done, little moon, sweet rose. It is the custom of all brides. It has been so since time immemorial with our women, they say, even before the day of our great Prophet. I do not know what thy husband would say, to see thy hair the color it now is."

"I do not care what he says, and I wish that he may never see me at all!" cried Ourieda. "I tell thee I will not have thy black stuff, and now I have made up my mind, I will not change it. Custom is nothing to me, and I will be a law unto myself."

Zakia dared protest no more; and, after all, this wild decision was not irrevocable. She was going to spend the whole week before the wedding in El Khadra's house. She would take the dye with her, and it was almost certain that the obstinate child's aunt, or her father, would force Ourieda to submit.

"Then, shall I plait thy hair for thee, and teach thee a bewitching way for a bride to wear it, in wheels and loops on either side?" she coaxed.

"No, leave it hanging. It will not be seen under my veil, when I go out, and it is still damp," said Ourieda. She thought that Norah would like to see it so—for the last time.

"At least, thou wilt give me thy little hands to make beautiful with my rosy lotion?"

"The tips of my fingers only," replied the girl firmly. "I hate to see the whole fingers red, as our Arab ladies have them. They look wicked, as if they had been dipped in blood. I will have mine as a *Roumia* friend wears hers; only the ends stained."

Her delicate little face, with its great eyes, expressed so much decision that

Zakia yielded; and she got no help from Laïla, who had heard everything; for the more ways in which Ourieda transgressed to-day, the better pleased was her elder sister.

The hair-dyeing process would have been long; and since that feature of the entertainment was unexpectedly abandoned, Zakia made the most of what was left. The bath attendants brought her a low table covered with mother-of-pearl. A gilded plate displayed a paste of henna and a small knife. Over these preparations the tall, brown figure of the woman bent eagerly, as if she were a priestess serving at the altar of beauty.

Two gaudily attired girls placed wax candles in sconces with five branches each, wound with narrow ribbons—a custom as ancient as the rest. Then one held the gilded dish, and Zakia seized the little hands of Ourieda. She rubbed the nails and the tips of the fingers as far down as the dimpled second joint with the paste, and they took on an ugly, brown color, which disgusted the young girl. But immediately they were hidden in a pair of large velvet gloves, which Zakia slipped onto the stained hands.

A few minutes of suspense, then the gloves were drawn off; whereupon all heads bent forward anxiously. The henna had "taken" well; and now came the moment when the presents would have been given to the bride elect by her friends, if the ladies had not been prevented by the bad weather from arriving. As it was, the attendants took the gifts which had been brought in, and smilingly piled them at Ourieda's feet. With the little pearl-handled knife, Zakia peeled off the adhering paste, and Ourieda's fingers appeared, tinted a deep rose, the nails glittering.

It was even earlier than they had dared hope when the sisters escaped from the Moorish baths, having bestowed gold coins on Zakia and the attendants. But Miloud, guessing from what he knew of the plan that they would waste no time, was already at the door with the carriage. He enjoyed driving, as much as the old coachman

enjoyed fingering the silver pieces which had bribed him to be ill.

There was a faint suspicion of a grin on the black face, as Miloud drove into modern Tunis, and stopped at the door of a tall, white building, elaborately ornamented, in the worst French taste, with stucco scrolls and moldings. A clock somewhere was striking five as he reined in his two big brown mules.

"What wilt thou give me, little rose, if I sit here, and let thee pay thy visit to Miss Luck alone?" asked Laïla, smiling at her sister in the dusk of the closed vehicle, her veil half off.

Ourieda was securing hers, ready to descend from the carriage. Her heart gave a throb of joy.

"Laïla! Dost thou mean it?" she faltered. "I will give thee my new bottle of attar of rose. Thou lovest it."

"I will do thee this favor for nothing," the elder girl answered. "I have meant it from the first, but I thought it would be fun to surprise thee at the last moment. I shall have other chances to talk with Miss Luck, but this is thine only one. Make the best of it; and as I have given thee a pleasant surprise, give her one. As soon as thou hast been admitted into her flat, by the young French maid of whom she wrote us, take off thy veil, and let her eyes first fall on thee with thy hair hanging round thy shoulders, as she likes it best. She will cry out with delight, I am sure, to see thou hast not dyed it black."

"Yes; I will do as thou sayest," answered Ourieda, throbbing with excitement and gratitude to her sister, who seldom showed so much interest in her affairs.

"And stay an hour if thou wilt," went on Laïla generously. "I will have Miloud drive me past the shops, so that I can peep at the windows and see if there is any pretty new thing there from Paris, since we came out last. We shall not be expected home till night, and Zakia will not arrive till bedtime, so there is nothing to fear. Aunt Aïssa will by that time have taken her sleeping draft, and no questions will be asked."

Miloud opened the carriage door, and

Ourieda and the negress descended in haste. Nouna took the young girl up to the door of Miss Luck's flat; but the instant it had been opened by a neat French maid, the veiled figure scuttled downstairs again. A moment later Miloud had driven away with Laïla and Nouna. But they did not go to the region of the shops. They drove to one of the finest and most ancient houses in the Arab town, where lived Lella Nedjma, the relative of Si Mohammed, the bey's cousin.

"Thy mistress is at home and expecting me?" Ourieda said in her pretty French to Miss Luck's servant.

The girl was not only new to the flat, but new to Tunis, and this call from a veiled Arab lady struck her dumb with surprise. She let Ourieda enter the little hall, and closed the door, before mumbling that mademoiselle was out, but if she were expecting a visitor, no doubt she would return soon—perhaps in a few moments.

"It is well, I will wait," said Ourieda, dropping her mantle, and wrapping her veil over her arm.

The servant stared open-mouthed at the vision of romance. For Ourieda had been dressed for this day's outing—her last as an unmarried girl—as if for a fête. Her jacket was of deep, rose-colored velvet, rich with silver embroidery; her blouse of pale-rose gauze; her vest a network of seed pearls; her sash, silver tissue, worked with pink roses and fringed with delicately tinted coral; her *seroual*, or trousers, full as a divided skirt, of rose-colored silk as pale as the blouse; and the deep crimson of her jacket was repeated in the little velvet slippers, crusted with tiny pearls. To the astonished Jeanne she was a princess strayed out of a fairy book—this magical girl, whose hair covered her like a brown cloak.

"Where shall I sit till mademoiselle comes?" Ourieda asked. "In this room?" And she gently reminded the maid of her duty, by motioning toward the nearest door.

"*Mais oui!*" answered Jeanne, still dazed.

It was the door of the salon, and of

course the vision must wait there for mademoiselle, as there was no other reception room. Jeanne knew practically nothing of Tunis and its ways. She had come to find a place there, because she had a cousin, who might one day be her husband, whose regiment was stationed in this town which struck her as so outlandish; and she had had time to learn very little of Arab customs.

It was true that the sofa on which the convalescent brother of mademoiselle reclined had been drawn into the sunny salon to-day for the first time; but if Jeanne vaguely doubted the propriety of ushering in the visitor, it was only because the young monsieur might be sleeping. She did not know if he would like to be disturbed; but it did not occur to her that it was a thing unprecedented for an Arab girl to be brought unveiled into the presence of a strange man.

Hesitatingly, but not knowing what else to do, she opened the door of the drawing-room for the fairy princess, and Ourieda walked in, flinging her veil down upon a chair. A cheap Japanese screen, for the flat was taken ready furnished—hid most of the room, until she passed round it, and the door had shut behind her, when, to her surprise, something moved on a bed-sofa which faced the window. A head lifted itself from a bank of cushions—a man's head, and a pair of eyes like those she had seen in dreams looked at her—at first in sheer surprise, then in dazzled admiration.

Ourieda started back, as if some terrible thing had happened, and, with a faint cry, covered her unveiled face with her hands.

CHAPTER XII.

FORBIDDEN FLOWERS ARE FAIREST.

Pat Lassels, his arm in a sling, forgot that he was an invalid still, and that sudden movements were strictly tabooed. He jumped up, and involuntarily came a step or two forward, hardly knowing what he did; for to him, too, this was a vision, a fairy princess out of the Arabian Nights.

Never in his life had he seen or dreamed of a girl so beautiful as Ourieda. He could have fallen down on his knees, worshipping her, imploring her not to be frightened. Once he had laughed at men who talked of "love at first sight," but then—he had not imagined that there could be such a divinity as this in the world. He could hardly believe now that she was real. Not to be in love with such a radiant apparition at first sight, even at first glance, would prove a man a blind fool, if he were free to love. And Pat was free, for he had never seriously cared for any woman.

His heart glowed in his breast, and gave light to his eyes. He told himself that just to see this angel once was worth all he had suffered. He was glad of everything that had happened, because it had brought him to Africa, to find her. And he would not lose her—he could not now.

But she stood shrinking from him, her face hidden in her hands, her long hair waving round her slight rose-and-silver figure. And suddenly he realized the poignancy of the situation for the girl, a point of view he had been too startled to catch at first.

It was all he could do not to cry out to her, in his Irish impulsiveness: "Why, you darling, you beautiful angel, don't you know I'd rather be struck dead this instant than hurt or offend you?"

But instead he stammered: "I—beg your pardon! You are my sister's friend. She was expecting you, but not here. I—"

Still hiding her face, Ourieda murmured: "*Je ne comprend pas. Je ne parle pas l'Anglais.*"

She knew that she ought not to stay for an instant; but where was she to fly? The carriage had gone. She could not run out, and wait in the public hall of the house, even if she were veiled. Besides, mademoiselle's brother, who could not know how Arabs felt about such things, would think her mad, or an idiot. And even the glimpse she had caught of his face, with its clear, true eyes, showed her how like the eyes and face were to those of her dreams.



Then one held the gilded dish, and Zakia seized the little hands of Ourieda.

Why was she not a European girl, able to talk with him freely and openly? She knew well enough that he would think it no harm. And never, never would she see her dream man again, after to-day. The rest of her life she was doomed to spend in prison.

Pat instantly began to speak in French.

"Mademoiselle—forgive me. I will go at once. But—perhaps I had better ask you first—there is some change of plan? My sister is to meet you here, not in the other flat?"

"Oh, yes, she is to meet me here," faltered Ourieda, still from between shielding hands.

Then suddenly she grew brave, men-

tally putting herself in the young man's place, realizing how exaggerated her prudery must appear to him. It was stupid and childish, she told herself, now that this accidental meeting had come about, to behave as if she were afraid her dear friend's brother could murder her with his eyes. She would show him that girls of her race had learned a little sense, and knew how to be dignified in an emergency.

With a great effort of self-control, she trampled upon the conventionalities which to her had been as the air she breathed. She faced that dangerous, unknown enemy—Man—dropping her ice-cold hands at her sides, the blood hot in her cheeks.

"Monsieur, do not go," she said, with a charming, youthful dignity. "I was taken by surprise for the instant, and so I behaved foolishly. Girls of our race do not show their faces to men, except those of their own family; but it is a convention, not a law, made by our Prophet. We all know that; yet we yield, and most of us have no wish for a different rule. In this case, however, no harm is done. Thou art my dear Miss Luck's well-loved brother, and I trust thee, though I would not have come into this room if I had known thou wert here. Stay, since the thing has happened by the will of Allah. Thou art still an invalid. Thou must not go, or I shall be grieved, and feel I have done thee injury."

Pat was human, and overwhelmed by the high tide of love. He felt that he ought not to take the girl at her gracious word, since she was caught like a bird in a trap; but the temptation was too strong.

"Will it really not offend you if I stay?" he asked, his eyes paying her such tribute of worship as might have made her feel a goddess, if she had had thoughts for herself. His eyes, as she met them, seemed to drink hers, as the sea drinks a river. His voice set her heart beating, her pulses thrilling. The dream man! At least, she had not been destined to miss all the meaning of life. Nothing could take this moment from her. It was hers to remember always. And there could be no sin in remembering. It was but a moment—a passing joy, like the light that flashes on a white dove's wing, and is gone.

"No, it will not offend me," she answered softly.

Almost, she began to think that this was a dream; that by and by she would wake. But she did not wish to wake yet.

"Will you sit down to wait for my sister?" he asked, hardly daring to come close enough to place a chair with his free hand. What if she should take fright again?

She sat down quickly, in a chair not so comfortable as the one Pat would have chosen for her.

"Thou must sit also. Remember thou art not yet strong," she said.

"And may I talk to you?" Pat asked, obeying.

"Yes," she answered bravely, thinking that his voice was like Norah's, but more thrilling—strange, how thrilling! He was the first man who had ever spoken to her, since her childhood, except her father, her Cousin Mahmoud, and the negro servants, who did not count as men. But in dreams he had spoken to her before.

"Talk to me—till thy sister comes. She will not be long, I think, for she knew I was to come here."

Pat reflected for an instant. Norah had told him that her two little Arab friends wanted her to meet them at a flat in the same building, where lived the young wife of an Arab doctor, a girl they had known for years. But Norah had gone out while he dozed, and he supposed now, as the Vision seemed so confident, some different arrangement had been made by letter since his sister spoke to him, and while he slept.

It seemed only too certain that Norah might come in at any minute, and break up this heavenly tête-à-tête. Never before had there been a time when he had wished his beloved twin long out of his sight, but at this moment he rejoiced in her absence, and hoped for its continuance.

"May I ask questions?" he inquired, with a humility that went oddly with his bigness and splendid young manhood. Never had he felt it with any other girl, but now he half feared to speak aloud, lest the fairy princess should vanish like a rainbow.

"Questions?" she echoed.

"Yes. Because Norah has talked of you and your sister. She has interested me. Your sister who is to be married soon——"

"Ah!" cried Ourïeda, and he broke off, in alarm lest an indiscretion had vexed her. "What did she tell thee?"

"Very little," he amended hastily. "You see, I was rather ill at first, and couldn't talk or listen much. The journey wore me out a bit, though Winthrop did everything he could to make it easy.

It's only for the last week we've had any real conversation, and—you know, perhaps, what Norah is—how foolish the dear thing is over me? She has made me jabber about myself and my adventures, mostly."

"Tell me about them!" exclaimed the girl, her heart beating, anxious above all things to calm herself before any other question should be asked.

Pat saw her agitation, and thought that he understood it. He imagined that he had perhaps shocked some Arab prejudice, in mentioning the subject of a marriage in the family.

For, in reality, Norah had had little time to tell of her late pupils to her brother; there had been so much to do for him, and so much she wanted to hear about himself. Besides, when he was well enough for sustained talk, they had touched upon the subject of Constantine Prevali.

It had come up because of the mystery of Pat's wound, which had not been received in fighting. He had been shot from ambush; and Norah had seized upon the theory that the would-be assassin was in Prevali's pay. The idea might seem fantastic, but the man was capable of anything. She had reason to know that!

And then, when she had paused, and flushed, her voice trembling, her eyes tear-filled, Pat had put an abrupt question, a question which led to revelations on both sides. No longer was there the barrier of a secret between the twins.

Norah confessed how, after she had twice refused Constantine Prevali—immensely rich, ambitious, not yet firmly established in that society where marriage with Lord Greyminster's niece could place him—she had received a letter threatening Pat. If she would come and talk matters over on a certain afternoon, at Prevali's house, he would give her an I O U of Pat's to destroy, with her own hands. Otherwise, he would call at once for payment, knowing that Pat was not able to pay.

Norah told how she had gone to keep the appointment; how Prevali confessed that, under another name, he was a money lender; that her brother was

deeply in his debt. How, after letting her tear up a paper which appeared to contain Pat's signature, Prevali had taken her to the door, then pulled her suddenly in, saying that she had been seen by a man passing—a great gossip. She must marry him now, or hear this visit talked about. Still, she had refused, believing that she had actually destroyed a paper which Prevali could use against Pat.

And rather than let her brother know that she had risked scandal for his sake, she had been silent about that visit. Afterward, when Pat had gone to France to fight the duel which had broken his career, she had wondered agonizingly if Prevali had spoken evil of her, if Pat had fought to protect her, though insisting that the quarrel had arisen over bridge.

Then, when Norah had told him these things, which she had not dared to tell before, in the face of his reticence, Pat had admitted that Prevali had threatened, had said that he—Lassels—had better use his influence with Norah to marry him, or there might be unpleasant gossip. And Pat, who had struck him in the face, had still the pain of knowing that his own eyes had seen Norah close to Prevali's door on the day when the man boasted of a visit from her.

Pat would have died sooner than ask a question, believing in his sister as he believed in the whiteness of angels; but now, when they were together, after all their troubles, and she had showed her desire to speak, he, too, could be frank.

So each knew the truth about the past; and they had gone on to speculate upon Prevali's actions: what they had meant, and what they might mean in the future, since it appeared that the man had recovered.

There had been a great deal to say, a great deal to discuss. Pat had explained to Norah some things she had never quite understood; how Prevali's money lending had been kept a secret from his relatives, the Greek Prevalis, who were reputable bankers, and from whom he had expectations. He had wished to hide his profession, while reaping every

advantage from it, and, for his own sake, would scarcely have kept his threat to make Pat's debts known. Therefore, he had schemed to get some real hold upon Norah; then, through her, upon Pat.

And when his plan failed, a wild wish for revenge upon them both had prompted the challenge to a strange duel. He had broken no law of his own country, but had been willing, in the heat of his anger, to run some risk of losing his life if he could ruin Lassels and break Norah's heart.

As it had turned out, he had saved his life, and succeeded in ruining Pat. But he had lost Norah; and now, evidently, he was wildly trying to retrieve that failure.

In talking everything over, the twins agreed that Duprez had certainly been Prevali's agent; and they thought it not unlikely that he, or some other tool of the Greek money lender, had struck again at Pat, in order that Norah might be left alone in Africa. If she did not suspect, with Pat dead and no one to help her, she might, after all, in desperation promise to be Prevali's wife—or such might have been his hope. Then he could take her back to England, and there would be a reconciliation with Lord Greyminster, with all that would mean of social advantage for Norah's husband.

But the brother and sister saw that ambition alone could not account for everything Prevali had done, everything they suspected him of doing. Certainly, in his way, he must have loved Norah for herself, and loved her passionately. Also, they agreed, his behavior suggested latent madness.

With so much to tell, so much to discuss, there had been few spare moments for talk about outsiders. Of Paul Winthrop, even, they had talked little, though Pat loved, and was grateful to, him, and wondered a good deal how he stood with Norah; why he had seemed surprised and enchanted on learning their relationship, of which he had been ignorant, and why he had undertaken a journey of so much difficulty and even danger, as traveling alone to Oudjda.

All, therefore, that Pat knew of El Khadra's family was that there were two beautiful sisters, one of whom was to be married immediately. He had not believed for an instant that his vision could be that one, for she was so young, so childlike, with her hair hanging over her shoulders like a shining veil. Nevertheless, it did not strike him that she was too young to be fallen in love with by him.

Just for the joy of seeing her, he felt that he would again go through everything he had suffered, everything that had led up to this moment. But he must see her again. He must make her want to see him again, too, and then he was sure that somehow he would be able to break down any obstacles of race and prejudice which rose between them.

Meanwhile, Norah had done a few commissions in the town, buying little things for Pat, and she felt so extraordinarily happy that she pitied Ourieda more intensely than ever; she herself had so much to be thankful for. Pat had been brought safely back to her, rescued from danger by Winthrop. Soon he would be well; and Winthrop said that it would be possible to buy him out of the Foreign Legion, though he had agreed to serve for five years.

Winthrop was going to find out the sum necessary, before anything was said to Pat; then, somehow, everything would be arranged. This "sick leave" would be changed into an honorable discharge; for Winthrop had promised her that he would "think of something worth her brother's while to do." He was such a friend, this wonderful American! How could she ever have lived without him? As soon as Pat was a little stronger, she and he together would tell Winthrop all about themselves, their true name, and the whole story.

Knowing that Pat had fallen asleep before she started out, and not wishing to disturb him, she did not stop at her own flat, on coming home, but went immediately to that of the Arab doctor, where she had arranged to meet Laïla and the bride elect. Poor little Ouri-

eda! Norah could hardly bear to think of the forced marriage, and the monotonous future, to which the girl looked forward hopelessly.

A knock at the door of the flat almost instantly brought a negress to admit the visitor. She looked a disagreeable old creature, Norah thought, as she was ushered into a hall, and then a salon, furnished with the wildest mixture of French and Arab taste.

It was a few minutes after five, and Norah half expected to find the two girls already in the drawing-room, with their "emancipated" friend and hostess; but no one was there. The negress, who could, or would, speak no French, ushered her in, indicated that she was to be seated, and then disappeared.

A moment later Constantine Prevali came in. He stood still for a second, smiling at her, his back against the door, evidently expecting that she would try to pass him and escape.

Sick at heart, and not knowing what to do, Norah sprang up, her blood pounding in her ears.

"At last!" he said. "I have taken a good deal of trouble for your sake, and have gone through more than most men will go through for a woman; but you're worth it. I love you! And I love succeeding when there's a thing I want. No use staring over my head at the door. You won't leave this room till you have sworn by everything you believe holy that you will be my wife."

Quick as light, and before he could guess what was in her mind, Norah rushed to the window, flung it open, and screamed for help, as he sprang to her, and dragged her away.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOW THE PLAN WORKED.

Laila dared not tell her father that Ourieda was at Miss Luck's flat. El Khadra would not believe that his "little rose" had insisted upon going there without his permission, or that Laila had found it impossible to detain her. He would blame his elder daughter; and, sending quickly for Ourieda, would never let Si Mohammed know what had

happened. And it was because Laila wanted Si Mohammed to know, that she had fallen into the scheme, helping Prevali, in correspondence, to arrange his part of it.

She found Lella Nedjma at home, in the old Arab palace where Si Mohammed sometimes came to see his widowed relative. The elderly woman began to apologize for her absence from the ceremony at the Moorish baths; but, tactfully and respectfully, Laila cut her short. She had not come, as Lella Nedjma thought, with a message from her Aunt Aïssa, but to ask what ought to be done in a dreadful emergency. Against her will—though she had implored, with tears—Ourieda had persisted in paying a visit to Miss Luck's flat, in the French town.

Lella Nedjma was startled, but not desperately shocked. "After all, the young *Roumia* will do the child no harm," she said soothingly. "Go thou, and fetch her away. Threaten, if she will not come, to tell thy father."

"I dare not tell him, for her sake," Laila persisted. "For Miss Luck is not at home this afternoon. Ourieda knew very well that she would not be there. My sister has gone to see what the *Roumia's* brother is like, he who came to Tunis wounded, from Morocco. Ourieda was always talking of him, since the day she saw his photograph in Miss Luck's room at our house. She called him the 'man of her dreams.'"

Lella Nedjma turned pale under her paint.

"Allah!" she faltered. "Can it be possible that the child has done this thing? She who seemed so docile and sweet—she whom I myself recommended to Mohammed, as being the Pearl of Tunis—perfect in body and heart?"

"If thou tellest Si Mohammed he will not marry her," said Laila, quivering with excitement.

"I fear he must be told," sighed the old woman; and Laila's eyes flashed. It was that flash which endangered her success; for Lella Nedjma saw it, and remembered the story of the two mothers—recalled Aunt Aïssa's hints con-

cerning the elder girl's jealousy. "That is, he must be told," she went on, in a changed voice, "if I see, when I go to the house of Miss Luck, that Ourieda is really there without the *Roumia*, and in the presence of a man."

"Do not give thyself the pain of going, in this storm," Laila urged. "There is no doubt that my story is true, and the thing done, and cannot be mended. Let Si Mohammed know while there is time, since it is according to thy conscience."

"It is not yet according to my conscience," replied Lella Nedjma sharply. "I shall start out immediately, and to save time I will take thy carriage. Thou canst wait here with thy negress till I return."

Crestfallen, but far from despairing, Laila had to submit. Perhaps, after all, it would be better for the old busybody to see for herself, she thought, when Lella Nedjma had driven away with a Bedouin servant maid, and a negro of her own sitting beside Miloud on the box. When she had found Ourieda, without Miss Luck, and probably with Miss Luck's brother—oh, how Laila hoped that it might be so!—she would be able to draw a more forcible picture for Si Mohammed.

Paul Winthrop had gone to Carthage when all anxiety for Norah's brother was at an end. There were things he had to arrange there, in relation to some excavations which, by government permission, were being made at his expense. But he had his motor car with him, and could spin into Tunis at any time he chose, from the strange, sad city of the past—city of ruins and of dreams.

It was now, however, nearly a week since he had felt able to leave the work he was superintending at Carthage, which had reached a critical and acutely interesting stage. His men had come upon a statue, almost perfect, and believed that they had reached the threshold of a buried temple. Paul was excited—the more so because he was happy again, and wanted something

splendid to tell Miss Luck, as an excuse to go and see her.

Perhaps, now that they had uncovered the statue, she would consent to come out and see it before it was moved from the place where it had lain for more than two thousand years. He could take her, and bring her back, all within two or three hours; and she should have a chaperon if she liked—an American lady whom he knew, staying at the Tunisia Palace.

But he hoped she would not want a chaperon for the motor run, as she knew him so well. If she would let him drive her alone, he would ask a question he had made up his mind to ask, the moment he learned that the "wild fellow in the Foreign Legion" was Norah's brother, not her lover.

So it happened that, on the afternoon of Ourieda's visit to the flat, Winthrop started for Tunis, meaning to call, ask after Pat's health, and sound Norah about running out to Carthage next morning.

Just as he was ready to set off, the post came in, and there were a lot of illustrated English papers, which he had been taking in lately, ostensibly for himself, but really for Norah. He made a pretense each week of glancing all these over, and then sent them off at once to his two friends in Tunis, knowing that they would always find much to interest them, in pictures and news of their own country.

Now, he took the bundle with him in the car; and, in order that the papers might seem to have been read, he let his chauffeur drive, while he pulled off the post-office wrappings. Then he began glancing at a few of the pictures, so that he could speak of them, if questioned by Norah or Pat. He did not want his friends to suspect that he subscribed for this budget of papers for their pleasure alone.

Thinking of something else, he hardly knew what he saw, until suddenly his eyes were arrested by two photographs. "The Honorable Norah Lassels," one was labeled; the other, "The new Lord Connon, late the Honorable Patrick Lassels, Lieutenant in the Grenadier

Guards." And the faces were those of Norah and Patrick Luck.

There could be no mistake. He was not deceived by a mere likeness. Miss Luck was the Honorable Norah Lassels. Her brother was the new Lord Conron. Was this the secret which the last time they met Norah had said that she and Pat wished to tell him, when Pat was strong enough to do his part of the talking?

The whole page was devoted to these two photographs, and one other, that of the "late Lord Conron, half-brother of the successor." Beneath the pictures were descriptive paragraphs; and as he read that the late Lord Conron had just died in a sanatorium, having lain there paralyzed for years, it occurred to Winthrop that very likely this news might come as a surprise to Pat and Norah. What reason they could have had for concealing their identity he guessed; for he remembered reading of Patrick Lassels' duel with Constantine Prevali, and its momentous consequences.

"Poor chap!" Paul said to himself. "He's somebody again now, anyhow, and will have a little money. As for my darling girl, if only she'll take me, and all I've got, she can have the pleasure of adding as much as she likes to her brother's income."

Reluctantly he shut up the paper with the old photograph of Norah—the only one he had ever seen of her. Already his chauffeur had brought him to Tunis, and into the street where she lived.

It was just as the car was slowing down, to stop before the door of the big white house, that a window on the top floor was flung open, and Norah's voice cried the one word: "Help!"

Almost instantly she was snatched away, but Winthrop saw her face—and the face of the man behind her. Also, he marked the window.

"Gaston, got a revolver?" he asked the chauffeur, his voice unsteady. "If you have, give it to me."

Gaston, being a Frenchman, always carried a weapon, and gave it, as he brought the car to a halt.

"Good! And get me a chisel out of the tool box. I may want it."

Almost as he spoke the chisel was in his hand. Gaston was quick-witted and quick of action.

"Now, bring me a gendarme, quick as you can—two if you can pick 'em up. May be case of life and death," Winthrop commanded brusquely.

Without waiting to answer, the chauffeur drove off, and Winthrop shot himself up in the lift, to the fifth story, in less time than the *ascenseur* had ever risen from bottom to top of that house before.

He tried the door of the flat at the right of the stairway. It was locked, as he expected; and it was because he expected the door to be locked, that he had brought the chisel. Doors, in new houses of the French quarter, are not made for strength; and Winthrop was a muscular man, as well as a determined one. In less than two minutes he had got the door open, and had made very little noise.

Then he dashed across the small, square hall, to the nearest door, thinking the window of that room must be the one at which Norah had appeared. That door was not fastened, for on the other side Constantine Prevali guarded it from Norah, and had no fear that she could pass him to reach it. But his one thought had been to get the girl away from the window, and he had not seen Winthrop's face looking up out of the motor car.

When Paul threw open the door, Prevali was completely taken by surprise. He should have left the servant—hired with the flat during the owner's absence—on guard in the hall, to warn him of danger, instead of giving her permission to go out, as he had done. But it was too late for regrets. There was the American whom Duprez had described, standing in the doorway, with a revolver aimed neatly at his forehead.

"Hands up, or I'll blow your head off," Winthrop said, in the quiet voice which had won Norah Lassels' trust when she heard it first. And now it was almost as steady and pleasant as it had been then.

Prevali had seized Norah's hand, and

kept it, protesting—after dragging her roughly from the window—that she had nothing to be afraid of, if only she would be reasonable. That he loved her desperately, and wanted her for his wife. All he asked was to make her happier—far happier than she had ever been in the house of her uncle, Lord Greyminster. And he, Prevali, had done nothing which need make him a pariah in her world—the world they could rule together, by virtue of his money, and her birth and charm. But, reasonable she must be, if she wished to leave that room alive, and go back to her brother.

"Promise to marry me, swear sacredly to keep your promise," he said, with a strange look of madness in his eyes, "or I'll shoot you, and myself, too. When your brother comes to know what has happened, it will kill him. He's not strong enough yet to stand a great shock. So if you want to save him you'll have to be my wife."

Perhaps the man would have kept his word, and shot her, if she had re-



"Hands up, or I'll blow your head off!"

fused, perhaps not; but his revolver was still in his pocket, and Winthrop gave him no time to pull it out. Prevali dropped Norah's hand, which she had been vainly trying to free, and held up both his, helpless rage in his eyes and his haggard, white face.

Then Norah ran to Paul and stood beside him.

"Go home, my child," Winthrop said, still very quietly, "and leave this madman to me. In a minute the police will be here. My chauffeur's fetching them now."

Norah was trembling; and, danger

being past, it would have been a relief to cry hysterically. But she kept back her tears, and tried to steady her voice.

"Don't ask me to go," she said. "I couldn't leave you. I should die of suspense."

The words, the tone, betrayed a secret which Norah had hardly known herself, a moment ago. Winthrop did not take his eyes from Prevali's, or slacken his finger on the trigger of Gaston's revolver; but suddenly the room seemed full of golden light for him; and he saw the other man's face grow red. He, too, must have known what Norah's pleading meant.

"You coward!" Prevali said viciously. "To hold up an unarmed man! Miss Lassels is engaged to me. I——"

"Don't talk, and especially don't lie, unless you want me to lose my temper, and send you in a hurry where you deserve to go," Winthrop cut him short.

"Anyhow, you'll hang for me!"

"I'll risk that."

And then the police came; two gendarmes, one of them a big fellow, and both followed by Gaston, who had left his beloved car for once to look after itself.

"I charge this man, Constantine Prevali, with threatening the life of this lady," said Winthrop. "And there'll probably be another charge later, of planning an attempt on her brother's life."

Winthrop was well known in Tunis, where he had been coming each winter for several years past; and Prevali, important enough in a certain set in London and Paris, was not known at all in this part of the world. Enraged, but powerless, he did not attempt to resist when the gendarmes searched him, and relieved him of the revolver which might have ended Norah Lassels' life.

It was odd, Ourieda thought at first, as the minutes passed, that Miss Luck did not come; but by and by she forgot to think it strange, because Miss Luck's brother let her think only of him. Timidly, partly to make conversation—she had never before talked with a strange man—partly because she really cared to

hear, she begged Pat to tell of his adventures. So Pat, anxious to please, and entranced by the light in the girl's eyes as she listened, told of his soldiering in Africa, of his journey to the Moroccan frontier, with other soldiers of the Foreign Legion; of the mysterious shot which had wounded him in a street of that wild town, Oudjda, just over the border; of the coming of Paul Winthrop to the rescue, and the beginning of their friendship.

"It was through Winthrop that my sister went to your house, I know, for she's told me something about it," Pat said. "And I shall get Winthrop to introduce me to your father, if you'll permit it, for—I *must* see you again."

The color burned in Ourieda's cheeks.

"Thou dost not understand!" she broke in. "It is not with us as in thy country. Thou and I can never meet again."

Pat flushed also.

"You wouldn't say that so coldly if you guessed how it hurt," he exclaimed. "Oh, I don't know what you'll think of me for speaking to you in this way, the first time I've seen you, but how can I help it, when you tell me it will have to be the last? Unless you dislike me very much, I shan't—I won't let you go out of my life. I must say this now, you see, or else you may never give me a chance to speak at all. At least I want you to know what you've done to me. You've changed everything for me—present and future—since you came into this room. You were like a vision and a revelation. Before I saw you, I thought myself rather an unlucky sort of chap, without much incentive to get well and live, except, of course, my sister. And now—though I've got no money, and not much of a prospect while my half-brother lives—I feel I could work miracles, if only you would say, before you go away this afternoon, that I *may* see you again, that I may try to gain your love some day, that I may have a chance to plead my cause with your father. And if he——"

"Ah, do not go on, I beg of thee!" cried Ourieda. "It is too sad. Thou

wilt break my heart. It is all impossible—what thou sayest. My father would never consent, even if I—I——”

“If you—what? Do you mean that I’ve offended you, that I’ve made you hate me?”

“No, no, not that,” she stammered, not able, after all, to tell him what had been on her lips to tell; that it was she, not her sister, who would be married in a week.

“What, then? Are you sure you could never learn to love me?”

“Ah, if I *were* but sure!” she cried, before she knew what she had said.

In another instant, Pat Lassels was on one knee beside her, as she sat; his hand—the one unwounded—clasping hers in a warm, eager clasp. And the other would have been out of its protecting sling if she had not laid her own upon it, and thus felt the pounding of his heart, as she touched his breast.

“Fairly princess, I worship you,” he pleaded. “It was all over with me, as you came through the door. You were to me like sunlight to a man who lived always in the dark. I shall love you to the end of my life—and life won’t be life without you. Tell me you may learn to care.”

“Ah, it would be but too easy,” the girl whispered. “I used to look at thy picture—and even before that, I dreamed of thine eyes and thy face, never of any other man’s. It is as if I had met thee before, in some other world. But always I knew there could be nothing but parting—even in the days when thou wert my ‘dream man.’”

“My darling—my beautiful star of the East!” Pat cried passionately, kissing her little hands with a worshipping love that sent fire through the girl’s veins. “There shall be no parting, for now I am no ‘dream man,’ but your lover—some day, please God, your husband. For no difference of race or religion can stand before such a love as I’ll prove mine to be. Not even your father——”

“Ah, but there is more—more even than all that, to part us,” Ourieda cut him short. “I must tell thee——”

But the door opened, and she started

to her feet, breaking away from him in terror. For an instant the screen hid them both, until Pat, too, was on his feet; but Norah, who came in, white and quivering with the strain she had passed through, gave a cry of dismay when she saw the Arab girl and her brother together.

Winthrop had left her at the door of the flat, obliged to go with the gendarmes, who, in his car, would take Prevali to the French police station.

Later, Norah’s evidence would be called for, but it would be given in her own house; and her anxiety had been, how to tell Pat of what had happened, without exciting him too much.

“We must be careful still that our invalid doesn’t get a ‘temperature,’” the doctor had said to her only last night.

But at sight of Ourieda and Pat alone together, she forgot her own feelings and Pat’s possible danger, in a shock of fear for the Arab girl. She felt as if she and her brother were guilty of horrible treachery to El Khadra, who trusted her with his daughter.

“Ourieda!” she cried, catching the girl in her arms, and pressing the childish face against her breast, as if to hide it from the man whose eyes should never have looked upon it. “Oh, Pat, this may make the most awful trouble, if her father has to know that you were here when she came. Go—go quickly—to your own room!”

“But, you don’t understand,” Pat pleaded. “We have talked together. There’s something I must tell you.”

“Tell me nothing. It’s you who don’t understand,” Norah broke in, almost angrily, still holding her friend in her arms. “Listen! There’s a knock! If her people have come for her! There’s some plot, I’m afraid—for I was told to expect her and Laila in the flat upstairs. But there’s no time to explain. If you don’t want her to suffer—go!”

There was that in her voice which killed objection. Without another word, without seeing Ourieda’s face again, Pat went. And almost as the door of the adjoining room closed after him, the salon door was opened by Jeanne, to admit Lella Nedjma.

"Praise be to Allah!" murmured the Arab woman, as she saw the two friends standing together alone. "It was a lie that Laila told."

Driving away in the carriage with Ourieda, Lella Nedjma asked no questions. Not because she was not keenly curious to know what, if anything forbidden had happened in Miss Luck's house, but, because in her Arab woman's diplomacy, she thought it wiser not to know. Since Miss Luck had been at home, she told herself, at least, there could have been no flirtation with the brother, nothing to call for serious notice from the family of the betrothed. Ourieda was a sweet child; and the heart of Mohammed, so bewitched by thoughts of her, need not be broken, after all. He would never know that Ourieda had visited her *Roumia* friend; or, if he did some day hear of the visit, his love would make him lenient to so small an offense.

But, as Lella Nedjma made these wise and comforting reflections, Ourieda spoke out, and confessed, with a kind of frightened defiance, that she had seen and talked to a man alone. Desperately she hoped that, if this thing came to Si Mohammed's ears, he might refuse to marry her, and then—then—if there were no hope of happiness, she would at least be free to live her own life, in her father's house.

"But it was not the man's fault," she added hastily, fearing some swift and secret vengeance upon Pat. "He did not dream that I was to visit his sister there. He was in the room, and we saw each other. I do not know yet whose fault it was; but there was something strange, for Miss Luck had been told that Laila and I would come to Djamilia's flat above, while we expected to find her in her own."

"I know the mystery, if thou dost not, my child. It was planned by Laila, who is jealous, who would hurt thee if she could, and rob thee of a husband richer and higher than hers." Lella Nedjma cut the girl short, with a cruel confidence in the truth of her assertion, which struck at Ourieda's heart.

It would be too horrible to think that

Laila hated her, and had planned this thing for her undoing. Yet the girl could regret nothing that had happened. She was very unhappy—more unhappy than she had believed it possible to be—yet she would not have missed the few strange moments of joy that she had known, even if they were to cost her life. "They will be all I shall have to remember, till my death," she was saying to herself, and calling up the love look in Pat's eyes, while Lella Nedjma wondered what was to be done with Laila.

Instead of going back to her own house, to pick up the girl, and take her home with Ourieda, the old woman ordered her negro to tell Miloud that he must drive at once to his master's. There, she explained to Lella Aïssa the plot which she believed Laila to have conceived and carried out; and Aunt Aïssa passed on to El Khadra as much of the story as the two women thought a man should know.

Fierce anger filled his heart against his elder daughter, when he learned what she had done, and what she had tried to do. Even though Aïssa assured him that Miss Luck had been at home—no thanks to Laila—and that Si Mohammed would never hear of the adventure from Lella Nedjma, El Khadra was in a rage which brought him near to the desire to kill.

Laila should never return to his house, he said. Until after Ourieda's marriage, it would not in any case be safe to have her back, for she might do the child some injury. She had shown herself capable of any wickedness; and who knew but powdered glass, or chopped leopard's hair, would be an ingredient of her next plot, since the last had failed? That very night she should go to the country, and remain in his house there, watched by servants whom she could not bribe.

If, in spite of all, her Cousin Mahmoud still wished to marry her, well and good; let him quietly take her from her prison, and make her his wife; there should be no ceremony, no rejoicing. And El Khadra insisted that he did not care for the gossip which would

be caused by Laila's absence from her sister's wedding.

"All the world of women in Tunis knows that she is of a jealous nature," he said, "and if they think she is sulking because of Ourieda's good fortune, her punishment is on her own head. She should rejoice that it is no worse; for she deserves death—such a death as men of our race gave treacherous women in old days. She deserves to be sewn in a sack, and flung into the sea."

So it was that the preparations for Ourieda's marriage went on, and she dared speak no further of her meeting with Pat Lassels; for Lella Nedjma had warned her that, if El Khadra or Mohammed learned that she had talked with him alone, soon and surely he would disappear, and no one would ever hear more of him in this world, or know how he had died.

According to Arab customs, Zakia, the "hennena," came to live in the house of the bride elect, during these last few days of the girl's maidenhood; and several hours each morning were spent in heightening Ourieda's beauty for the eyes of her husband. Though she still refused to have her hair dyed, and they humored her strange fancy, it was washed, and perfumed with a rich scent known in Tunis as *le parfum du bey*, Si Mohammed's favorite fragrance. Her face and throat, her arms and hands, were bathed with milk of almonds; her pretty coral nails were shaped according to the fashion; her little, rosy ears were pinched to make them more rosy; and all sorts of rouge for the cheeks, paint for the lips, and *kohl* for brows and lashes, were manufactured under Zakia's directions, to be ready for the future, since the girl obstinately rejected them now.

Her gifts from the bridegroom had all come: wonderful jewelry, which had belonged to his ancestresses of royal blood; and the coffer heaped with gold coins, which, according to ancient law, remains the property of a wife, even should she ever be repudiated by her husband. Now, all these things, as well as many other gifts, from his relatives and hers; her trousseau, and numerous

little treasures of her girlhood, were packed, and ready to be carried by a procession of gayly dressed, smiling negro servants, from El Khadra's house to the palace, outside the town, where Ourieda would go to her husband, the man she feared, and had never seen.

Invitations had been sent out to half aristocratic Tunis, for the last feasting at the home of El Khadra, and to see the bride in her wedding finery before her departure; on the part of Lella Aissa, who would entertain the women splendidly in the harem; on the part of El Khadra, who would entertain the bridegroom and a large company of men in his own part of the house. Four cooks were busy, preparing every sort of fantastic dainty; dancers and musicians were engaged to amuse the guests.

No one talked of anything but the wedding, and Ourieda's future happiness. Every day, at the hours of prayer, when the muezzin's voice cried from the mosque, and the doves wheeled, the bride elect prayed to Allah and the Prophet that she might die, since now her only hope of release was in death; for she had, even at the last moment, begged her father to save her from this marriage, and he had refused.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE APPEAL.

At first Pat Lassels would not believe Norah when she told him that Ourieda was to be married in a week. Then, when she had convinced him that there was no mistake, that the bride was the girl he had seen, the look on Pat's face frightened his sister.

"What is it, dearest?" she asked. "Are you ill again?"

"I love her," he answered, "and I think she cares for me. I swear she shan't be married against her will to a brute of an Arab, whom she's never seen. The thing is monstrous."

"Monstrous, but inevitable, I fear," Norah sighed. "Oh, my poor boy! What a cruel trick of fate that you should have seen each other just too late!"

"It's not too late!" he echoed, almost

savagely. "I tell you, Norah, it would not be too late even if they were taking her to that man's house. I'd snatch her from him at the very door."

"She wouldn't go with you, dear one," Norah tried to soothe him. "You don't know what these Arab girls are. I have begun to understand a little. I saw when I was in the house that the poor child hated the thought of marrying Si Mohammed, and—and I saw, too, that part of her hatred was because of *your picture*. I think, if I hadn't been stupid enough to show it to her, she would have resigned herself to her fate more easily. But even as it was, she had no idea of rebelling against her father's will. Submission seems to be in an Arab woman's blood. All the conventions of who knows how many thousand years are chains that make her a slave, even in our century."

"But it is different with Ouriëda now," Pat argued hotly. "Before we met she was helpless to escape. Since she knows I love her, and am ready to fight for her——"

"She would understand better than you do that fighting could do no good."

"She wouldn't believe that, if only I could see her again, and argue it all out with her myself. Oh, for Heaven's sake, Norah, go to see her—take her a letter from me. You could at least do that."

"It would be treachery to her father, and would only make Ouriëda more miserable than before, without helping either of you."

"If you refuse," Pat pleaded, "it will be worse than treachery to me. It will be cruelty. To have to let her go, without making even an effort to save her! Norah, I believe it will kill me!"

Tears poured over his sister's face.

"Don't—don't say that!" she begged. "You know I'd do almost anything rather than you should suffer—you've suffered too much already, dearest. But you saw her only once. Surely you can't have learned to care as much as that, in an hour!"

"She is all the romance, all the dreams and ideals of my whole past, come to life in the form of a perfectly

beautiful and adorable girl," Pat answered, his face rapt and transfigured. "The moment we looked into each others' eyes we knew that we belonged to one another, heart and soul. Give me a chance to ask, at least, if she will let me try to save her. You see, dear, now that we've heard the news about poor Conron, there isn't the question of money to stand in the way. I can get an advance easily. Not that I shall be rich. But if she'd let me take her away, she wouldn't have to face poverty. And Lord Conron can do his best to live down Pat Lassels."

"Pat Lassels doesn't need to be lived down!" Norah protested. "Right or wrong, I'll take the letter. I warn you, though, it will be useless. She's the sweetest child in the world, but to attempt what you ask would need a woman, strong and courageous as I think no Arab woman is. And even if she dared, the attempt would be almost sure to fail."

That same night, the night of the second day after Prevali's arrest, Paul Winthrop asked Norah to marry him. And because she was so happy, because she seemed suddenly to understand how much she cared, and what a wilderness life would be if she lost her love, she was more ready than she had been before to carry the letter to Ouriëda.

But the worst part was, that the thing was so easy, because of El Khadra's trust in her. She was free to visit his daughter, and wish the bride elect happiness. The man did not know that his "little rose" had been seen by the eyes of Miss Luck's brother, that the sweet petals of her youth and beauty were paling now, and drooping, for love of a stranger.

He did not know that while others made songs in her honor, to sing on the day of her wedding, the bride sang under her breath the old Arab love ballad, saddest of all: "How sweet is death, yet how far sweeter still, is the flower forbidden, whose fragrance kills."

Ouriëda was in her own room, when Norah arrived, though the salon of the harem was filled with guests, laughing and chatting with Lella Aïssa. The girl



The color burned in Ourieda's cheeks. "Thou dost not understand!" she broke in.

had complained of a headache, and was lying down; but the message came that she would see Miss Luck, and Hemar led the visitor to her young mistress. Nouna was in disgrace, and her brother Miloud; but they had not been sent away, lest they should talk too much.

Even in the three weeks since Norah had left El Khadra's, Ourieda had altered; and the last two days had made marked change in her. She was very thin, her eyes mournfully large and bright, as if they glittered through tears. Her complexion looked transparent, like the texture of a lily when the sun shines through it.

Norah took the child in her arms, and

held her close for a moment, without speaking. A great tenderness and pity beyond words overcame her. She was almost ashamed of her own happiness in Winthrop's love for her, and hers for him—their freedom to belong to each other. Not for the world would she have told Ourieda the news of her engagement.

"My poor one, are you so unhappy?" she murmured, at last. "My sweet rose—my little sister."

"Ah, if I could be that!" Ourieda whispered, then hid her face between her hands, as at first she had hidden it from Pat Lassels.

"I have a letter for you," Norah said

guiltily. "Perhaps I ought not to have brought it—but he begged so hard, and he worships you so. Is it safe for you to read it? Laila——"

"Laila is not in the house," the girl broke in. "The sidi, my father, has sent her away, and by and by Mahmoud will marry her quietly. She may have been cruel, and wished to do me harm, but—she was my sister. I loved her, and I miss her every hour."

Then Norah put the letter in Ouri-eda's hand, and turned away, not to see the beautiful, sad eyes as they traveled, line by line, down the pages Pat had written.

The girl read every word twice over, and yet again. Then she asked: "Dost thou know what he says?"

"No. I only guess—for he told me that—he wanted you to let him try and save you from—from——"

"Yes, that is it. He asks me to run away with him. Ah, if I could! If to try and fail would mean death for me only, I would go, and not hesitate. But to fail would mean his death, too, and so I—will not even try. Yet do not tell him that. He has taught me love. Just in looking into his eyes, I learned the secret of loving. And so I know that because he loves me he would risk death, and even take it for my sake, as I would for his. I must give him some other reason, or he will not be content."

"I am afraid nothing will ever make him content in this world if he must live without you," said Norah sadly, for her heart was breaking for her brother and this girl who loved him. Her own happiness could never console her for their pain. "His one hour with you seems to him worth more than all his life that went before, or could come after."

"Oh, if I could see him again, just for one moment!" Ouri-eda whispered. "I wonder—I wonder?"

She thought intently for a few seconds, and then said eagerly: "If I could have a word with him—if I could touch his hand, look in his eyes just once! For an instant we would be happy, and forget misery. Then—I would tell him

that he must go away—alone, and forget me. I would let him believe that I was afraid—for *myself*, not for him—to try and do as he asks. That would make it easier for him, perhaps, for I think men of thy race do not love their women to be cowards."

"How could it be managed, that you should see each other?" Norah inquired anxiously.

"I have been thinking. When thou leavest me, Aunt Aïssa will invite thee to the last feasting in our house. It will be to-morrow, and will last all to-morrow night. On the morning of the day after I am to be dressed in my wedding things, and carried like a doll, when I have been seen by my friends, to the palace of Si Mohammed. There will be more feasting; and in the evening he will see me for the first time—but only for a few moments; and though he will speak to me, I must not raise my eyes.

"Then Lella Nedjma, as the woman most nearly related to him—for his mother is dead—will bring me water to drink, and Si Mohammed will drink from the same glass. In our religion that is a sign that we have been made one, and so we shall be actually married; though I shall not see him again till late next day, when all the feasting will be over, and we will be left alone.

"Oh, dear Miss Luck, dear Norah, if I could die before that time! It will be too late, when I have gone to Si Mohammed's house, for I shall be his wife, and cannot betray him. But if thou couldst tell Aunt Aïssa that thou wishest to see my father; and when thou seest him, if thou wouldst say: 'Sidi El Khadra, pray invite my brother to thy feast, with thine own men friends,' he would send the invitation gladly. He does not know that thy brother and I have met—or thy brother might not now be safe in thy house. When my dear love is here—under the same roof with me—and I have thee near enough to help, if need be, it is possible—just possible, he might be smuggled for a single moment into our part of the house. Only he must try to think of a way. I cannot think much now."

"We will try," said Norah. "He and I will both try."

But she was sick with fear for Ouriëda and for Pat. She had heard some strange tales of tragedies in harems, and she thought with horror of what Arab revenge might be.

CHAPTER XV.

THE LAST FEAST FOR THE BRIDE.

It was time to go to the house of El Khadra, for it was seven o'clock, and the feast, which would last through the evening and all night, was beginning. Winthrop had been invited before the invitation was extended to Norah and her brother. Pat knew and delighted in his sister's engagement, as heartily as it was in him to delight in anything now; and all three were going to El Khadra's together.

Norah knew that Pat had some desperate plan in his mind, but he did not wholly confide in her or in Winthrop. She knew that this reticence sprang from no lack of love, but from his fear that both might pronounce his scheme worse than useless; that they might try to dissuade him from an attempt upon which he had set his heart, and would stake his life. So, understanding and sympathizing, but hoping little, Norah and Winthrop refrained from questions. Only, they promised that, whatever he might ask of them at the last moment, they would do.

Pat—now Lord Conron—had thrown away his sling and his bandages, though the French doctor had advised against what he called "the rash haste of these English." That Norah and her brother were not English, but Irish, was a mere detail, though it might have strengthened his point of view, had he considered it.

All day, nearly, before the evening which was to decide everything, Pat was out—out for the first time since Winthrop had brought him home to be nursed by Norah. What he had done, he did not choose to tell; but when he came back to the flat, in time to dress, his eyes sparkled with excitement, and

there was a slight flush on his cheeks, which had been pale during these weeks of convalescence.

In his hand he carried a rather large, flat parcel; and when Winthrop arrived to fetch the brother and sister, Pat gave this bundle to Norah.

"I want you to take it to Ouriëda," he said. "Give it to her when she is alone, if you can. If not, make a joke of the thing. Say it's another wedding present, which you would like to give her when nobody was looking on. In the package, just on top, is a letter, explaining everything. If she cares, and is brave, as I believe she can be, she will do what I tell her. And one thing she must do, if she consents, is to keep as near you as possible all the evening, till—something happens."

"What will happen, Pat?" Norah asked, her voice trembling with anxiety. "I ought to know, if I'm to help."

"Better, for your sake and Winthrop's, dear, that you shouldn't know, whether the business succeeds or—fails. I don't want to involve you in my trouble any farther than is absolutely necessary. All I want is for you to stop with Ouriëda, and as close as you can to some door of communication with the men's part of the house. If an alarm comes—no matter of what kind—don't be frightened, but stand in front of and protect her from being seen, until she says to you: '*Sauve qui peut!*' That will be her signal for you to run and scream, and do whatever the rest are doing."

"If you can get out of the house, well and good. But if Winthrop is willing to stay, and will let you shift for yourself, getting home, all the better for every one concerned. No harm could come to you in those streets, or I wouldn't suggest it. It's for Winthrop to decide; but it may be that El Khadra would be glad to have a calm, cool chap like Paul standing by him just then—an old friend, and incidentally a friend of ours, too, who might plead my cause if he got a chance. And now you may guess a little why it's just as well that you and he shouldn't know any more than I've been obliged to tell you of my

plans. And I'd rather you wouldn't ask questions."

Norah was very pale; and never had the twin brother and sister looked more alike than at that moment.

"Only one question," she said, and when she and Pat had gazed deep into each other's eyes for a few long seconds: "It's this: what will happen to you if Ourieda consents, but fails you at the last minute?"

Pat shrugged his shoulders.

"I don't know, and don't care. But, anyhow, nothing will happen that can hurt her—or you."

"I'm not thinking of myself," Norah said gently.

"In any case, Pat, I'll look after your sister," Winthrop assured him. "And, as you say, I'm El Khadra's friend. But, all the same, I wish you success. And if success comes, I'll try and straighten things out for you and Ourieda as well as I can. If you fail—and I daren't hope too much—why, then, you know very well that I'll stand by you with all I am, and have."

"Thank you, Paul," the new Lord Conron answered.

And the two men gripped hands. All three understood one another. There was nothing more to add; and, for the moment, nothing more to do.

As the blue Tunisian twilight fell, the guests of El Khadra and Lella Aïssa, for the last feast of the bride, began to arrive. To-morrow evening the feast would be at the house of the bridegroom.

For the ladies, driving up heavily veiled, in the shuttered carriages, El Khadra had ordered a small door, usually closed, to be opened, so that the principal entrance might be free for the men. This side door, in a narrow alley, led, by means of a passage shorter than the other, into the patio or court of the harem. And this fact—with the fact that he was an Arab—explained the reason why that door was not only locked on ordinary occasions, but the only key kept in his possession. Arab men adore their women, and—distrust them.

To-night, however, might well be an exception to his rule. Laila was away, banished to the country. So far as El Khadra knew, the bride was submissive, after her brief, childish rebellion. Lella Aïssa was delighted with the marriage, contented in every way with her own lot and Ourieda's. The women servants were ecstatically interested in the feastings, and had no wish to leave the scene of attraction; besides, the door was guarded by two of the stolid, fat negroes upon whom El Khadra, like other Arabs of his class, almost implicitly relied.

The rooms belonging to the harem ladies were on the first floor, the story above the garden court; while those of the women servants opened upon the ground.

Now, white-cloaked, black-veiled figures began trooping in a procession up the stairs, the wonderfully fine, embroidered Tunisian veils being removed by Hemar's help as their wearers arrived at the top.

And in this procession of flitting, soft-footed ghosts, was only one unveiled figure, save those of the dancers coming to entertain the guests. The two famous professionals wore high, golden crowns, and their bare necks and arms glittered with a mass of jewelry, which weighed them down. There was a tinkling of gold and silver anklets as they moved, and their barbaric garments of violently colored brocades and golden gauze gave out wafts of perfume.

But the other unveiled figure wore a pale-blue evening cloak from Paris, in which the Honorable Norah Lassels had been seen during part of the London season, a year ago. Under that cloak, Norah carried the flat parcel which Pat had given her; and when Hemar offered to take her wrap, as she took the veils of the Arab ladies, the Roumia shook her head with a "No, thank you," in Arabic—one of the few phrases she had learned.

She knew that, to these women unversed in European customs, it would not seem extraordinary that she should keep her cloak. They would suppose

that, according to the outlandish ideas of a *Roumia*, it was part of the costume proper for an evening entertainment. And, luckily for her, it was a pretty cloak, of shimmering satin *charmeuse*, with jeweled trimming, and a fluffy lining of chiffon.

Lella Aïssa was receiving the ladies, even as, at this moment, El Khadra was receiving the men downstairs, in his part of the house. On the balcony that ran round the garden court of the harem, a door was open, usually locked on the other side; and beyond was an iron grille with ornamental bars set very close together.

Through this, across a short passage, a glimpse could be caught of El Khadra's patio, where the men were arriving: beautifully dressed Arabs, young and old; a few French officers high in the service and esteem of the bey; two or three Europeans in civilian's clothes; and among these Winthrop, who introduced Lord Conron, Miss "Luck's" brother.

"It is better El Khadra should know you have a title," Paul had explained to Pat. "It will add to his respect for you, and, if anything comes of this night's work, Heaven knows you'll need it all."

He might have added: "If you survive." But Winthrop was no croaker, and he knew his friend to be determined for good or ill.

Ouriada, as the bride and heroine of the feast, did not help her aunt receive. To-morrow, in going to Si Mohammed's house, she would be dressed like a doll, and placed upon a kind of throne, or "couch of state," where she would be viewed by all his female relatives and their intimate friends.

To-night, however, in her father's house, she could move about with a certain amount of freedom. She could even go to the grille and watch the dancers, who would presently perform in El Khadra's garden to delight the men, after having displayed their jewels to the eager and excited ladies. But, though all this was permissible for the bride, it would not be "good form," as she might catch sight of her fiancé among her father's guests; and a curi-

osity to see his features before going to his house was not considered quite well-bred in an Arab girl.

There was a pretty, flowerlike group before the bride, when Norah arrived; but with gentle Eastern politeness it melted away to give the *Roumia* place; for it was an open secret that Si Mohammed did not approve of European friends for his wife, and that Norah would not be invited to visit her. This was the *Roumia's* last chance, and the charming, butterfly creatures were ready to let her have it, for her consolation as well as the bride's.

"I have brought you a parcel and a letter from—you can guess," Norah whispered in French to Ourieda.

And, taking quick advantage of the interest every one displayed in the two idollike dancers, the girl turned her back to the company, and found the letter in the package.

She had been pale before, but she grew deathly white when she had read what her lover had to say.

"Dost thou know what he has written?" she faltered.

"Only a little," Norah answered.

"I cannot—oh, I cannot do as he asks," the girl said, white-lipped. "It would mean failure—his death."

"He's ready to risk anything for love of you," Norah murmured, suddenly beginning to be Pat's champion in this wild adventure, though she had advised against it. "As for you—he thinks he can protect you, if you'll trust him. And, oh, Ourieda, dear little rose, though I am very anxious, I believe you can trust him. He would rather die than live without you."

"And I, rather than live without him. Oh, if we can but die together, for me it will be sweet! Norah, you give me courage and strength. I will try to do what he wishes."

"I will help. Is there some door which leads into your father's part of the house—another as well as this grille?"

"Yes, downstairs, in the patio. But it will be locked on the men's side."

"We must hope that my brother will

think of that, and perhaps bribe some servant to unlock it. Who knows?"

"Miloud might, for a great deal of money. He is in disgrace, but to-night he is allowed to help give refreshments to my father's guests. There is so much to do, every servant is needed."

"Could you and I go and stand near that door in the patio? For I don't believe anything could be done with this grille. Pat wouldn't think of its existence. His idea was a door on the ground floor, I am sure."

"We could follow the two dancers, who must pass through that door, which will be locked after them. Others will follow, too, to have a last look at the dancers' jewels. It will not be thought nice of me to go—but what matter? And nobody, not even Aunt Aïssa, or Lella Nedjma, will scold the bride to-night."

"I will keep the package for you, under my cloak, dear."

"I thank thee. If thou couldst open it cautiously, so that all might be ready, it would be well. The letter tells me I shall find a white burnoose, and a pair of red boots, such as boys wear."

Even as they whispered together the dancers were going. Already all sorts of expensive and rare food had begun to be served to the men, whose turn, in Arab houses, comes before that of the women, even at a feast; and while El Khadra's friends ate, and drank delicious sherbets, the famous professionals would dance their strange dances of the far Southern desert.

Suddenly, as the glittering, tinkling pair passed through the mysterious door in the patio, held open by white-robed negroes, there came a loud explosion, and a bright red light flared up—a light that seemed fierce enough to burn the world. It shone everywhere—in the men's garden; in the women's court. Where it had started, no one knew; or where the explosion had been, for the ears of all were stunned, their senses dazed.

Women shrieked, and ran about wildly, wringing their hands, or clung together, and collapsed, half fainting with fear. Men shouted, and little boys,

brought to the house by their fathers, screamed shrilly. The dancers, instead of passing through the open door, fell back moaning, before the great light which seared their eyes.

The two negroes, whose business it was to lock the door when the professionals had passed, forgot their duty, and ran through into the women's court, fiercely pushing aside the dancers, who stumbled, and fell in a glittering heap, wailing prayers to Allah.

In the midst of the confusion, no one had time to notice a figure, apparently that of a young boy, wrapped in a white, hooded burnoose so long that only his red leather boots showed underneath. He ran through the door which the negroes had left open, and plunged into a confused crowd of men, in the large patio beyond the passage.

What happened there for the next few minutes, while the ruddy flame burned and hissed, no one ever quite knew or remembered.

In five minutes, or a little more, the fizzing red light had burned dull. No one was hurt. The house was apparently not on fire. El Khadra's orders began to make themselves heard. It was suspected that the alarm was a thieves' plot; yet no one seemed to have been robbed, although some of the guests had disappeared; among others, Lord Conron and his sister had gone, but no one cared, since their only friend present was Paul Winthrop; and Paul Winthrop drew nobody's attention to their absence.

At first, when Ourieda could not be found, it was thought that she had rushed away in a panic, to hide herself; but at last, when the confusion was ended, and it was seen that no great damage had been done, the assembled ladies began to inquire for the bride.

"She must have run to her room, and perhaps she has taken the *Roumia* with her, for Miss Luck, too, has disappeared," said Lella Aïssa.

The old lady, with several intimate friends, hurried off to look for the bride, and reassure her; but, after all, she was not in her room. Then, in growing fear, a search was made

through the whole harem. Not a cupboard, not the meanest room in the quarters of the women servants, not a shady corner of the fountain garden, was forgotten; but the girl had vanished like a spirit.

For a while, only a few knew of her disappearance. There were whisperings, and dark eyes looked into others questioning, with dilated pupils and lifted brows. Hemar and the other women servants began to wail, and tear their faces with henna-stained finger nails. It was rumored about that something terrible, something mysterious had happened.

Lella Aïssa sent a negro with a message to El Khadra, who came to her quickly, in a corridor out of the way of the women guests, who would have fled horrified from the presence of a man.

The two consulted together in trembling voices. A second search was made, and as a result no hope was left. The bride had left her father's house.

"The *Roumia* has taken her away," said Lella Aïssa. "Oh, my brother, darkness has fallen on our home. There will be no wedding."

"Why should she go with the *Roumia*?" the man asked, in an agony of fear and loss. "Surely she had forgotten her childish reluctance to marry? Surely she was happy?"

But Lella Aïssa gave him no answer. And El Khadra read in her silence a confirmation of the doubt he had long ago tried in vain to kill.

"Go back to the women," he said sternly. "Tell them all, every one of them, that Ourieda has been found. That she was hiding, crazed with fear by the explosion and the fire. That she is ill, very ill, and must have rest. Send them away, and then——"

"And then—what shall we do then?" questioned his sister sadly.

"We shall see what to do when the time comes," he answered. "It may be even yet that nothing serious has happened. After all, we may have the wedding. Who knows but in the morning——"

"There will be no morning of joy for

us," the old woman broke in upon him. "I tell thee again, the darkness of night has fallen upon our home, though the bridal lights are still burning."

An hour later, those lights had been put out. Even the guests in the men's part of the house had to know that the bride was ill; though by their lips her name was not spoken under her father's roof.

Next day, the story ran through Tunis that El Khadra's beautiful young daughter, who was to marry a cousin of the bey, was dying. The night after, there was mourning for Ourieda's death; and Si Mohammed had lost his bride.

It is in this way that, in the East, they manage to hide the dramas of the harem. Even Si Mohammed did not know that the girl who in a few more hours should have been his wife had run away to marry another man.

Her father knew, from Winthrop, but not in time to stop the eloping pair, for Pat Lassels' desperate plan had succeeded. He had engaged staterooms on a ship due to sail from Tunis in less than two hours after his effective use of mortars and Bengal lights in the house of El Khadra. Then it had been a race against time, but the race had been won. And a ramshackle cab, containing a young man, and two girls wearing long cloaks, motor bonnets, and veils, had reached the dock five minutes before the ship was to sail.

One of these girls was Norah Lassels; for at the last moment it had been thought best for her to go, too. Paul Winthrop was left to break the hard truth to his friend, El Khadra; and it was the most difficult task of his life. But he had the gift of eloquence, and he made the most of Lord Conron's title and importance in Ireland.

"If you really mean to keep the secret, and let all your world believe that your daughter is dead," he finished by saying, "there's no reason why any one should ever identify her with Lady Conron."

"My daughter is dead to me," said El Khadra, in a voice which would break, though he sternly tried to hide

his anguish. "I shall never see her again, in this world or the next."

But twelve months later, he thought better of his resolution. By that time Norah Lassels was Norah Winthrop. She and Paul, having returned from a trip to America, were in Paris, and El Khadra came from Tunis to visit them there.

At home, there was nothing to keep him, for Laila was the wife of Mahmoud, and her father had not seen her face since the night she was sent in disgrace to the country. Lella Aissa was dead; Si Mahommed had just married a young princess of his own race, and the supposed death of Ourieda was almost forgotten, except by a few women who had loved her.

To receive El Khadra, Paul and Norah left their hotel, and took a furnished house, with a large garden, near the Bois—for Norah no longer detested Paris, as once she had detested the scene of her brother's duel. Constantine Prevali was in a private insane asylum now, and she was so happy with Winthrop that she was ready to pardon her old enemy for everything in the past.

After all, if it had not been for Prevali, Pat and she would never have gone to Africa. She would not have known Paul; Pat would never have met Ourieda. And for Ourieda, more than ever would Lord Conron have counted the world well lost.

But fortunately it was not lost. Many things could be forgiven Lord Conron, which would not have been forgiven Pat Lassels. And though he and his rather

mysterious bride, vaguely believed to be Spanish, lived extremely quietly in Ireland, he was much liked, and she was tremendously admired.

When, at the same time that El Khadra made his visit to France, Conron brought Ourieda over to Paris, people turned to look after her in the streets, because of her extraordinary, dark beauty. And Pat was very proud of her, in her pretty French frocks and hats, which, oddly enough, became her as well as the Arab finery in which he had first seen and loved her.

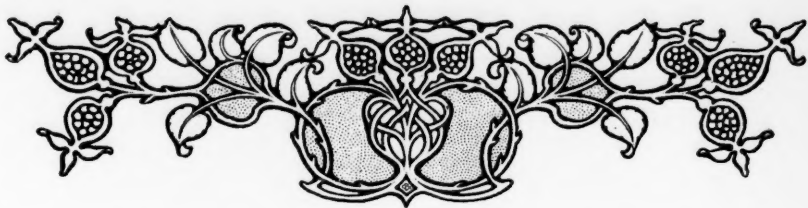
But the garden near the Bois was fenced in with great trees. Once the gates in the high wall had shut upon the Winthrops' guests, they were as well hidden as in the fountain court where Norah and Ourieda had first met. No eyes, not even Pat's, saw the greeting between father and daughter; but afterward Ourieda was more radiant than Pat had ever known her, even in the earliest days of their honeymoon.

"The sidi, my father, has forgiven me," she said to her husband, in the pretty, halting English she had learned with much pleasure and some difficulty. "Now I am perfectly happy."

"I was perfectly happy before," answered Pat, rather wistfully.

"Ah, so was I!" she answered hastily. "But now, with thee and with him both to love me, I am—I am *pluperfectly* happy. Oh, I am glad I learned that word the other day, in thy dreadful English grammar. It is just the word I want to express my heart. Yes, I am *pluperfectly* happy, oh, sidi, my husband!"





The Majesty of the Law

By James Hay, Jr.

ED SUMMERS, the sheriff of Crilmer County, found Mr. Easton on the porch gazing into the changing gold and opal of the sunset sky. Easton had about his eyes a tired look, but the sheriff was too deeply engrossed in other things to note the fact. Summers, mentally as well as physically, was a heavy man. Besides, a mob was on its way to the county seat. He had had business with other mobs, and his memories of their work confined him to contemplation of what the night held in store.

"Evenin', Mistuh Easton," he said, his deep voice indicative of unusual worry.

As he dropped his huge bulk into a chair too small for him, Mrs. Williams, Easton's landlady, started the phonograph in the hall. Ordinarily the sheriff would have welcomed the music, for there was only one such instrument in Crilmer, but this time he turned a frowning face toward the hall door as if he considered such levity ill-timed.

"You're not as fond of music as I am, Summers," remarked Mr. Easton, with his ready smile, while the machine ground out the opening chords of the tune.

"Well, the fac's air too serious foh triffin' now," he replied. "There's a mob comin' hyuh to-night."

"So I heard," said Easton.

"An'," continued the sheriff. "I've got to deputize you."

The other man smiled in ready agreement.

"I'll be glad to serve," he said, "but I really can't believe that a mob——"

He did not finish the sentence, but straightened up in his chair, his head half turned toward the hall door, from which came the music of the phonograph. While the sheriff looked at him in amazement, his lips closed into a straight line, and the tired look about his eyes was pronounced enough for even the unobservant Summers to see it. Easton was in the grip of an emotion strong enough to make him oblivious of the sheriff, strong enough to put pallor on his face, and make little drops stand out like pinheads on his forehead, where the skin seemed suddenly drawn taut. If the sheriff had been in the habit of frequenting the fashionable cafés of New York instead of living in this Virginia village eighteen miles from the railroad, the tune would have reminded him of shaded lights, the bubble of wine, the curling smoke of cigarettes, and the chorus of men's low voices and women's laughter.

But he thought of none of that. All he saw was Easton's face, ordinarily good-looking and strong, but now drawn to strange lines.

"What's the mattuh with you?" he asked suddenly.

Easton started, and fumbled in a dazed way for his handkerchief. The sheriff repeated the question.

"Nothing—a slight attack," explained Easton.

His smile was unpleasantly forced. He had detected in the other's voice the suspicion that he had been frightened by the prospect of probable danger in serving as a deputy to guard the jail.

Summers looked at him a moment, and then asked, a little shortly:

"Got a gun?"

"Unfortunately I have not," answered Easton, restoring his handkerchief to his pocket.

"Well, I sent one to the jail for you," said Summers, rising from his chair. "Bettuh repo't there in an houah."

"Certainly. I'll be glad to."

He seemed to have recovered his composure; but, as the sheriff passed through the gate at the foot of the yard, Mrs. Williams, coming out to the porch, saw that her guest's hand trembled when he relit his cigar.

"You goin' to serve to-night, ain't you?" she asked, standing by the railing and looking out toward the blackening mountains.

"Yes," he said abstractedly. After a pause, he added: "That was a new tune you played just now, wasn't it?"

"Yes. Some new reco'ds came today. That was one of 'em."

"Could I trouble you to play it over?"

When it ended, he rose and called in to her cheerily:

"Thank you very much, Mrs. Williams. It's a beautiful thing."

He went down the steps and out of the gate, his straight, slender figure outlined in the twilight by the white flannels he wore. Nobody else in Crilmer wore white flannels. Mrs. Williams watched him out of sight, and wondered, as she had often wondered, who he was, and what he had been before his arrival in the village. She had heard the note of distrust in the sheriff's voice, and she had seen Easton's hand tremble, but she knew he was not a coward.

"Any man," she told herself, "who could choke Tony Jenkins' mad dog to death ain't a coward."

Three months before Easton had appeared in Crilmer, and became a per-

manent boarder at Mrs. Williams' house. No one knew him when he arrived. Nobody had ever learned anything of his past life. He had never even mentioned how he had covered the distance between the railroad and the village at the foot of the mountains. He remained, as he had first come, a mystery and a charming personality, a character that touched finely and affectionately the simple life of the people about him. His bearing was a suggestion of the best of life, the great things of the world; but, if he had known them, he never mentioned them.

All he ever showed was a great love for the people among whom he had made his home, a people who breakfasted at seven in the morning and went to bed at half-past nine in the evening. Crilmer was a village upon which peace rested like a benediction. In the late afternoon its girls and young men "promenaded" its one street, while the older men sat on tilted chairs in front of its two stores or formed a group in the courthouse yard. At midnight the only sound that broke the silence of the sleeping village was the bark of restless dogs or the monotonous call of cows separated from their calves.

The life was neither too much work nor too much pleasure, but it was characterized by a splendid kindness and an unquestioning hospitality. And into such an atmosphere Easton had come, thankful for the calm, and adding to the happiness of those about him. Crilmer was proud of him, with a pride shared by the men, the women, and the children, for he was equally entertaining in the courthouse yard, at the church sociables, and when he met the "kids," as he called them, on the street.

Mrs. Williams, to whom he turned in response to her motherly interest, alone knew the tired look that often came to his eyes, and, seeing this, she had guessed that he had suffered greatly.

"He ain't no coward," she concluded aloud, "but he does act queer."

At the jail the sheriff, having stationed men inside and outside the building, stood, with Easton beside him, in a

group of forty in the jail yard. All had their coats off. Few of them wore hats. It was midnight, and there had settled on the crowd the silence of tense expectancy. Easton, in his white suit, was the most conspicuous figure among them. A blue cravat, knotted at his throat, was the only touch of color in his clothing.

The jail stood in the middle of the base of an equilateral triangle which was called the "public square" of the town. From the apex opposite, eighty yards distant, the clay road stretched to the north for half a mile like a white band in the August moonlight. It was along this road that the mob would come.

"I wan' to say one word," the sheriff spoke in a low, husky tone to those around him. "I'm swo'n to uphol' the majesty of the law. I've deputized you, and now you, as well as me, air swo'n to uphol' the law. Whatever happens, nobody mus' lose sight of that. I'll be shot befo'e I'll fail."

"What do you think will happen?" asked Easton quietly.

The question seemed a natural one from him. In that group, although the sheriff was doubting his courage, he was the dominant figure, just as he had dominated the people since he had come to Crilmer.

"You see, it's this way," explained Summers. "It don' mattuh about this prisonuh bein' only a nigger accused of killin' a white man. In the sight of the law, it's as much ouah duty to protect' him as anybody else. An' we may have to shoot, but not befo'e the mob shoots. They'll argue a little, an' then they'll cut loose. When they do, we'll go right back at 'em."

Just then some one whispered sharply:

"There comes Joe Swayze!"

Easton saw Joe running down the long, white lane of moonlight toward the jail.

"They're comin'!" called out the running man. "There's mo'e 'n a hundred of 'em."

In a few minutes the mob swung into sight. It came like a long, sinister line,

showing black against the clay of the road. It wavered from side to side in the manner of men unschooled to march. But there was no question about its advance. Under the splendor of the full moon, it looked like a reptile sent out to hurt and sting. Leaning against a tree, Easton could feel the freshness of dew in the light breeze, and there was in the air the perfume of roses.

At one time, far up the road, the mob was swallowed by the shadow from a grove of trees, and this gave it the appearance of a snake going into its hole and squirming out again. For a while there was complete stillness, the silence of suspense. Not even the sound of a dog's bark was heard. Then there came the hammerlike echoes of the marchers' feet as they plodded against the dust. The sheriff began to breathe heavily. The men about him mumbled to one another:

"I wonduh if they'll rush it."

"No; they'll call for the keys firs'."

"It's a shame to shoot white men foh a nigger."

It occurred to Easton that in his party and in the other there were only brave men, and he reflected that the bravest people in the world are those who live close to the trees and the earth.

The mob, which had been marching four abreast, poured into the triangle, and spread out like a solid, dark splotch. As the men came to a halt, they dropped the butts of their guns to the ground with a dull thud. For a full minute there was a silence broken only by the shuffling of feet.

The sheriff and his men, partially concealed by the trees near the jail, stood motionless.

A tall, superbly built fellow, evidently the leader of the mob, called out:

"It's no use, shurruff! Give us the keys."

"Not on your life, Ben Lawson," was the roar of the sheriff. "I know you, and I know a lot mo'e of your crowd. If you make any trouble, you'll get trouble yohself."

"We want that murderuh, that nigger, an' we're goin' to get him," called the mob leader.

"We'll shoot the first man that comes within twenty yards of this jail," replied Summers decisively.

The answer was quick action. With sixty yards to go in order to reach the jail, the mob started, like a solid mass, toward the building.

"Shoot when I say!" yelled the sheriff.

Within another half minute the mob would be at the twenty-yard limit, the mark that meant shooting. There came out on the still air the terror-scream of the imprisoned negro.

Without warning, Easton sprang out to meet the mob. With a bound, he cleared the low fence in front of the narrow yard, and stood, unarmed, before the rushing men, his white figure brilliant in the moonlight. He checked the advance as if he had been white lightning, and, for an instant, he remained silent and still, his left foot thrust forward, his right hand held high above his head.

"Stop!"

His one word, sudden, sharp, imperious, brought the restlessness of the mob into quiet. His arm, still upheld, seemed to be holding back the mass in front of him by sheer muscular force.

"You men are about to break the law," he began, his bell-like voice full and clear. "You are arguing by false logic when you say the commission of a crime by you will rightfully punish a crime already committed by that poor man in jail. What possible——"

A pistol bullet, fired from the back of the crowd, went through the sleeve of his upstretched arm, making a sound as of a thumbnail slipping loose cloth. He did not even lower his hand, but stood motionless, his slender, white form untremulous, disdaining danger. The derisive yell with which the shot had been accompanied died in the throat of the mob. Those in front of him seemed, all at once, hypnotized by the dramatic coolness of the man.

"I know," he said, his voice bell-like as ever, "you consider me a stranger among you, an unknown dandy from the city, but I love Crilmer and her good name."

Then, uninterrupted, he made his speech. It was an appeal, he said, not for mercy, but for common sense. He spoke of the futility of trying to rob the law.

"The law," he said, "gets its offenders always—always."

As he spoke, the manner of his delivery, the terrific force of his words, and the crowd's recollection of his bravery compelled attention.

"I have known Crilmer," he concluded, "as the home of nobility and loving kindness. The world knows it as the abiding place of honor—that honor which fears God and hates a coward. Surely——"

He did not finish the sentence, but stood, his hands hanging easily at his sides, his head thrown back in proud, confident review of his hearers. Then, after a pause, he stepped forward, his right hand held out to Lawson.

"Mr. Lawson," he said, "I'd like to shake hands with you."

The leader met him halfway.

"Will you go, you and your men?" asked Easton quietly.

"Yes, we'll go," said Lawson, and added to his followers in a voice a little shaken: "Men, he's right. Let's go."

They broke up into small groups, and made their way, shamefacedly, from the triangle, and up the white road.

When they had left, the sheriff and Easton walked across the "square" to the street. Easton carried his coat slung over his right shoulder. He was quiet and dejected. Once he struck his foot against the rope which the mob had left lying, half uncoiled, in the dust, and he shuddered like a man suddenly cold.

At the corner, he said to the sheriff:

"Come with me to your office."

On the short way up the street, the sheriff voiced again his admiration of Easton's courage and eloquence, to all of which the other man replied wearily, seeming on the point of utter exhaustion. But Summers, ponderous and slow, was not to be silenced. His arm on Easton's shoulder, he panted out his words of praise.

"You've upheld the majesty of the

law," he said, "an' any man that does that is great, mo'e than great. You don' seem to realize what you've done."

In the office, the bar of moonlight through the open, uncurtained window made a lamp unnecessary. The sheriff sat down at his table, and Easton, letting his coat slide from his shoulder to the floor, paced slowly up and down the room, so that every few moments the moon lit up his tired face. Summers, not a person given to fine distinctions, thought he had never in all his life seen a man look so tired.

"I want to tell you a story," Easton began, in tones that were lifeless, "an unusual story, and then I want you to do the thing you believe to be right."

He paused, and put his hands behind him, standing still and gazing down at Summers.

"But I want you to understand that the mob has not made me tell it."

He stopped again, and passed his left hand wearily across his forehead.

"I don't suppose," he said, "you ever heard a waltz called 'The Voice of the Stars'?"

"Nevuh did," said the sheriff.

"I have heard it three times," said Easton, resuming his walk.

The sheriff uttered an ejaculation.

"Why," he said, "you're shot!"

Easton looked down carelessly at his sleeve where it showed red.

"Yes," he said, "that bullet just nipped my arm."

"But don' it hurt?" Summers was seriously worried.

"Oh, no; not at all," Easton answered. "But, as I was saying, I have heard that waltz, 'The Voice of the Stars,' three times. The first time was in a theater, when it appealed to me as unusually beautiful. The second time I heard it was in a café on Broadway in the city of New York, and, while the orchestra was playing it, I was called on the telephone by my brother's wife. While they played that tune, she talked to me frantically over the wire. She said my brother was about to kill her, and she implored me to come to her assistance. I had been so engrossed in the music, so much in accord with the

brightness about me, that the terror in her voice shocked me unspeakably. It appalled me."

He stopped at the window, and leaned his hand against the wall.

"I went," he began again, "because she was the best woman on earth. My brother was about to kill her. She stood with her back to the wall, her head held high, and there was in her eyes, not only fear, but also a kind of scornful surprise. Unquestionably he meant to kill her. There was no time for second thought. I shot him. If I had not shot him, he would have murdered her."

The sheriff looked up at him in a sort of dull amazement. As has been pointed out, the sheriff was a heavy man, mentally as well as physically, and his mind had hard work to assimilate what was being told to him.

"The third time I heard the waltz," said Easton, "was on Mrs. Williams' phonograph this evening. Funny, isn't it, how the important things hang to a man? They are the bloodhounds of events. Circumstances never lose the trail. They find their man sooner or later. Well, when I heard that waltz this evening—rather, yesterday evening—I made up my mind to tell you this story. The mob had nothing to do with it. Only I spoke to them as I did because my consciousness was surcharged with the inevitable knowledge that a man must be punished for his deeds. Somehow when I heard that tune to-night, the thing came over me. The man who wrote about being sure your sins will find you out, must have been an inspired author. And it seemed to me an outrage, a horror, that those fellows should so needlessly redden their hands. The little I did to stop them was only a prelude to my telling you what I am saying now."

He fell to pacing again.

"The killing of my brother was accidental," he said. "I did not mean to kill him. I only intended to disable him. He was in a terrific rage. In another moment he would have shot her. When my case went to trial—"

"You wair tried!" exclaimed the sheriff.

"Of course, I was tried. At the trial my story was not believed. And one of those rumors that grow out of such a thing had it that, before her marriage, I, as well as my brother, had loved her. There was no truth in it, but the story harmed me.

"And the jury could see no reason for my firing the shot.

"I was sent up for eight years. Summers, there is a purgatory on earth—a special sort of inferno in the prisons of this country. I endured mine for seven months. Then I escaped. Two months after my escape, I came here and found this place. It has been a benediction to me. Your men and your women have taken me in with open arms. They like me, and I love them all. You know how I like to sit in front of the store in the afternoon and give the children candy. I have found here a perfect peace.

"From the outside world I am safe for the rest of my life. But from my conscience I am not safe, and for this reason I have brought my story to you."

He sat down opposite the sheriff, and, leaning both elbows on the table, looked across at the official of the law.

"I have told you," he said, "because I will take your opinion on whether I should go back."

The sheriff moved in his chair until it creaked under his weight.

"You air innocent?" he asked solemnly.

"I killed a man," replied Easton. "I was sent up for eight years for killing my brother."

From the jail, scarcely more than a hundred yards down the street, there came a rattling sound, as if the prisoner had dropped his tin drinking cup on the cement floor of the cell. The sheriff stirred uneasily. Then he rose slowly from his chair, and walked heavily to the window, where he stood with the white moonlight full on his big-molded features. He took his watch from his pocket, and rubbed the end of his big thumb round and round on the dial.

He was confronted with the greatest problem of his life, and his clumsy, ponderous mind worked slowly. His lips moved tremulously, and once he rubbed his wrinkled forehead with the hand which held the watch. Through the open window the night breeze brought the perfume of a near-by rose bed. The sheriff had as his witnesses only the moon and the roses—and the man who sat there, quiet, his sleeve turning to a deeper and deeper red.

Summers glanced at his watch.

"It's half-pas' two now," he said, pausing a moment on each word. "The mail stage leaves at six. We'll go on that."

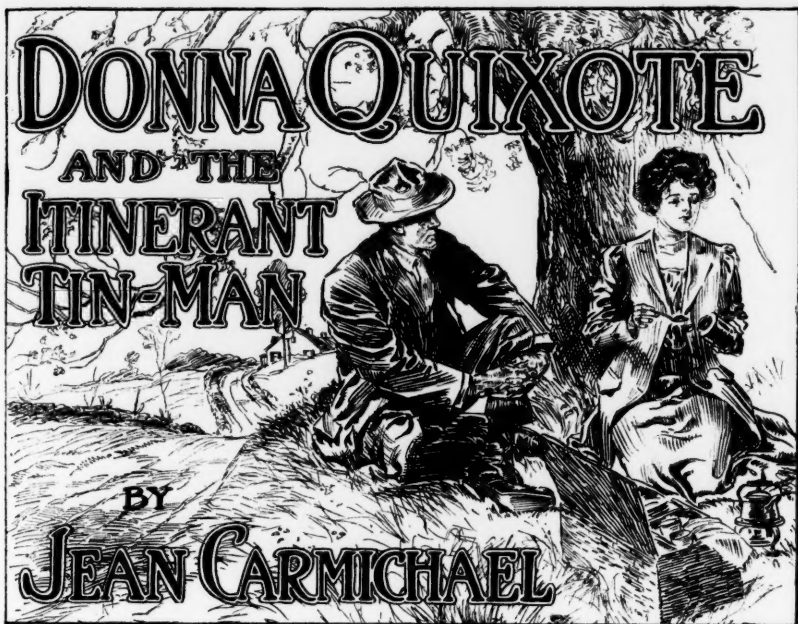


Rainy Evening

NIGHT, and a black and glistening web of streets.
The water heaping up
A broken pavestone's cup,
Springing to join the thickening shower that beats.

Gold beads of light along the thoroughfare,
Whose crinkled pictures glow
Along the pools below;
Gold, with a shattered ruby here and there.

The pat of feet that pass and pass again.
Yet is't not you I hear,
Though once you held me dear
Enough to seek me, plunging, glad, through rain!
JEANNIE PENDLETON EWING.



ILLUSTRATED BY R. EMMETT OWEN

DOWN the river road, sweet with apple blossoms, Kathryn Van Doren drove her new motor car with the recklessness of an absent mind. She was unconscious for the time of the beauty of the spring afternoon, of the soft haze on the distant hills, of the fresh green of the fields that bordered the river, even of the apple blossoms that fell on her in a pink-and-white shower. Instead, she was rebelling at the futility of life—her life, at least.

To the casual observer this occupation would have seemed nothing short of sheer idiocy, for to the world in general Miss Kathryn Dupont Van Doren was a young woman to be envied. She had not only more than her fair share of health and good looks, but in addition she was so rich that she was a public character. The newspapers for the past two or three years had been constantly filled with items about the balls and dinners given for her, refer-

ences to the visits she paid to the great houses at Newport or Lenox or in England, descriptions of her presentation at the Court of St. James, rumors of her engagement to the Duke of This or the Marquis of That.

Recently, however, these newspaper stories had been varied by accounts of her building model tenements, of her opening a library on the East Side, of her taking a trainload of fresh-air children up to her beautiful estate on the Hudson and entertaining them for a fortnight. Society had smiled at first and overlooked her fads, as long as she was willing to entertain it, but when she began to refuse invitations and to ask East Side mothers to her house parties instead of her friends on Fifth Avenue, society began to shake its head and say she was becoming peculiar, and remembered that her great-grandfather had once for a brief time been in a private retreat.

But society would have lifted its eyebrows in cynical surprise could it have read her thoughts, as she drove recklessly past flowering orchards on that lovely May day.

"I would like nothing better," she was telling herself, "than to be a gypsy. It's a gypsy day, and I wish I were out in the hills without a care in the world. I wish I were poor. I'd rather be driving about in a gypsy cart than in this brand-new eight-thousand-dollar touring car."

At the instant that she made this revolutionary statement she swept around a sharp turn, and caught a glimpse, in a second of horror, of a peddler's cart jogging peacefully along in the exact center of the narrow road. She had presence of mind always, and she instantly brought the car to an abrupt stop, but not before she had struck the rear of the cart. It was all over in a moment. She herself was almost thrown out by the sudden stop, and she had a bewildering glimpse of flying pans and kettles, as her ears were deafened with the cacophonous beating of tin on tin. Bedlam was let loose. The road was strewn with pots and kettles enough to stock a score of kitchens.

Whether the driver of the cart had been thrown out with his assorted tinware, or whether he had instantly sprung to the rescue of his trembling horse, Miss Van Doren, in her confusion of mind, could not tell, but at all events he was standing at its head, a tall, broad-shouldered, sun-bronzed young man, who paid no manner of attention to her in his eagerness to soothe his nerve-shattered steed. But after he had convinced it that the earth was still revolving in its accustomed orbit he left off stroking its velvety face and whispering soothing things in its ear, and turned to his assailant a rather stern and angry face, that instantly changed to surprise, and then softened into a smile at the sight of the small heap of embodied contrition on the front seat of the big red car.

"I—I—am more sorry than I can say," Miss Van Doren faltered. "Let me help you pick up your things."

"Oh, no, I cannot allow such a thing," the peddler remonstrated, but she was down in an instant, her small, bare, brown hands busy among dusty tinware.

There was something authoritative about his tone, something masterful in the way he squared his broad shoulders under the shabby coat. His mouth and chin, she thought in the fleeting moment, when she glanced up into his face, were the most determined mouth and chin she had ever seen. But to be told what she should do by a tin peddler! Heavens, no! She went on laboriously rescuing brightly polished pans from the dust and piling them in orderly rows.

"I hope that nothing is injured," she said. "Of course I should want to make it quite right. It was awfully stupid of me." She turned contrite violet eyes to his face again. "I am sorry."

"Oh, it is not worth mentioning," he assured her, and brushed it aside as a bagatelle. "The only regret I have is to see you down in that dust picking up tin pans. I cannot allow it. Please—I must insist."

One glance into his face convinced her that it was futile to combat his will, and she, the independent and proud Miss Van Doren, meekly gave in to the tin peddler. She rose, dusted her fingers daintily on her handkerchief, and stood before him, slender, immaculate in white linen, while he, with quick movements, deposited his wares helter-skelter in the cart.

"You don't do it as well as I," she criticized. "You are sure that your cart is not hurt?"

She lingered in a strange loathness to go back to her motor car.

The man made a hasty examination. "There is not a scratch," he assured her. "And Pegasus will soon get over his attack of nerves. You did it very cleverly if you *had* to run me down."

He smiled suddenly, and his smile was delightful, Miss Van Doren thought. It lighted up his rather serious face. His gray eyes had a way of twinkling that betrayed a keen sense of humor. She caught herself wondering why not one of the men she knew, men

of her own class, was as attractive as this ordinary tin peddler. She wished, for a delirious moment, that she were not the rich Miss Van Doren, with a town house and three country places, a yacht, five motor cars, and an aeroplane. She felt that, on the whole, life would be far more thrilling if she were a rosy-cheeked farmer's daughter, who might buy her pans and kettles of this

"Au revoir," he said, and in his glance admiration was plainly written.

She turned away, with the blood mounting into her cheeks, rather ashamed that an utter stranger, a man, to the ordinary observer, quite beneath her in station, should be capable of causing her heart to beat a little faster. She stepped slowly into the car, and then turned back to look again. The



She caught a glimpse, in a second of horror, of a peddler's cart jogging peacefully along in the exact center of the narrow road.

tin peddler, and charm him into lingering at her kitchen door. She would make him presents of pies and doughnuts, and they might walk together under the pink domes of the apple trees, possibly drive out in his cart on a Sunday, and then—— She caught herself blushing at the lovely pastoral she had conjured up.

"I must go," she said, and then, on a sudden impulse, held out her small bare hand. "Good-by."

A deep flush mounted under the tan, as he took her hand in his.

man was still standing in the road beside his cart, his soft slouch hat in his hand, and on his face a strange, inscrutable look. Then "Au revoir," he called again, as the motor car sprang forward with a snort of joy at once more leaping down the long, straight road ahead.

Miss Van Doren was again absent-minded, but this time she was not rebelling at the futility of life. Instead life seemed very interesting, almost exciting. A warm glow stole over her. Her blood seemed to be rushing faster through her veins. She felt quite reck-



A sun-bronzed young man, who paid no manner of attention to her in his eagerness to soothe his nerve-shattered steed.

less—a Donna Quixote going out to seek adventures. The wind whistled past her, as she sped down the deserted road in the opposite direction from The Laurels, the smallest of her country places, which she always occupied in May. She had forgotten that she was to dine that evening at the Van Astorbilts, and that she had promised to give Lord Bungeigh his answer in the conservatory after dinner. She had forgotten everything in the world except that spring was in her blood, and it was good to be alive.

Half an hour later, when the peddler's cart, in a cloud of dust, appeared around a certain bend in the river road, Miss Kathryn Van Doren, with a sun-flushed face, was down on her knees, intent on the interior mechanism of her new car, which should not at this early day have gotten itself out of repair. But stalled it was, and Miss Van Doren, although she bore a chauffeur's license, seemed incompetent to start it.

Nearer and nearer came the tin peddler down the long, straight stretch of road under the apple trees, urging Pegasus to a gallop in his eagerness to come to the rescue of Donna Quixote. When he came abreast of the big red car, he flung down the reins, and sprang out.

"It's a case of the hare and the tortoise," he exclaimed as Miss Van Doren lifted a flushed face to him.

One lock of bronze hair had blown down into her eyes, and when she stopped her labors long enough to lift it into place, she left the mark of dusty fingers on the white skin.

"You are certainly heaping coals of fire to come to my rescue," she told him. "Do you know how to start this abominable motor? It's new, and I don't quite understand it yet. It's not like the one I usually drive."

A fleeting look of something akin to pleasure flashed across his face as he stooped beside her. One would have

been almost convinced that he was rejoicing at her inability to induce the creature to move.

"I really know nothing at all about the thing," he asserted. "You see, automobiles are not in my line. I travel in tin. Not but what I have *been* in motors," he hastened to assure her. "I have friends among the chauffeurs," he explained.

She seated herself on the mossy bank beside the brook.

"There's nothing to be done then but wait for some one to come along who *does* understand them," she said. Her tone was not at all bored. On the whole, she seemed to be enjoying the situation. "This is not a road frequented much by motor cars," she went on. "That's why I took it, for I am tired of the State road, fine as it is. However, surely some one will come before long."

The peddler was standing in front of her, twirling his hat in his hand, looking down at her meditatively.

"I don't quite like to leave you here," he said slowly. "It's a bit lonely. Otherwise I could drive to the nearest garage, and send some one to help you."

She had been studying him closely, and now a strange little comprehending look lighted up her face. She smiled to herself as she suddenly bent over and dipped her fingers in the brook. One would have said that she had solved a problem. When she looked up the smile was gone, her face serious.

"No, please don't go," she begged. "It is a lonely place, and I am a bit nervous, I'll confess, but I am sure some one will come soon. Could you spare the time?" she asked anxiously.

He glanced at her in a puzzled sort of way, then said gravely: "I've all the time there is. I should be only too glad to serve you," and went down and tied his horse to a little birch tree.

When he turned again, she was busy at the tonneau of her car, and presently she came back to the brookside, bearing an English tea basket.

"Will you join me in a cup of tea?" she asked graciously. "I am half

starved myself, and I never travel without my teakettle."

Astonishment was written large on the peddler's countenance at this extraordinary young woman's vagaries, but he courteously accepted her invitation, and seated himself on the moss and violets at the foot of a birch tree whose feathery new leaves were fluttering over his head against a sky as blue as Italy. Before them the long road lay like a ribbon of white, decorated with the shadows of trees and passing clouds. Beyond the sloping fields and orchards lay the river, holding up a mirror to the blue sky. The air was sweet with the scent of apple blossoms and a score of fresh wood perfumes from the pine forest that stretched behind them up the hillside.

The man made himself more comfortable, and drew his lungs full of the sweet, fresh air. Then he turned his eyes from the fair spring landscape, and watched the girl busy over her pretty task of tea brewing. She had tossed aside her hat and veil, and the sunshine was finding the gold threads in her bronze hair as she bent over the steaming kettle. Her face was serious, absorbed in the careful measuring of the tea, as her little hands deftly manipulated the silver caddy and spoon. Then, after the hot water had been poured over the fragrant leaves, and she had left it to steep for three minutes, she leaned back against her tree, and regarded him. He had turned his eyes by that time to the long road, and was watching it half dreamily, but when he felt her inquiring gaze he turned back to her.

"Do you know," he said, with his charming smile, "roads have a charm, a fascination for me. They are so full of mystery. They arouse one's imagination. You don't know what may lie beyond the next curve—strange, wonderful, beautiful, terrible things. Happiness or death may lurk around the corner. Why, when one is jogging along without a thought of serious things"—his gray eyes twinkled suddenly—"one may be nearly killed by a motor car rushing on one from behind."

The scarlet flushed into her face.

"Don't remind me of it," she begged. "I am so ashamed."

"You must not be," he assured her. "It was one of the beautiful things—not the terrible—that the road held for me. Why, if you had not come near killing me you would never have condescended to atone so nobly by asking me—a peddler—to drink tea with you."

She smiled, and, removing the cover from the little pot, inspected her tea.

"I am sure that has steeped enough," she said. "You will have lemon and two lumps or three?"

The tongs were poised over the sugar until the weighty matter was settled.

"Only one," he told her. "I am not such an epicurean as to demand three lumps of sugar of life. I am, on the whole, I think, a stoic. Perhaps in that case I ought to omit *all* sugar. What do you think?"

"I'll put one in and one on the saucer," she compromised. "I'll not look if you choose to put it in surreptitiously. There!"

She handed him the little cup, and passed delectable cakes.

"Thanks, Mademoiselle Hebe," he exclaimed, and then frowned at himself as he sipped his tea.

"Tell me more about roads," she begged, as she settled herself luxuriously on her mossy seat among the roots of the great pine. "What else do they mean to you?"

"They are symbols of progress," he told her, "of reaching out into the new and untried. They take us away from the dead past into the new living future. Do you remember where Walt Whitman tells us 'To know the universe itself as a road, as many roads, as roads for traveling souls?'"

"Yes, I remember. Walt Whitman is splendid." Her face lighted up with enthusiasm.

"You, too, like the open air, but you do not know it enough. You cannot, until you live as I do on the road—an itinerant tin man." His white teeth flashed in his bronzed face. "Whitman says that the secret of the making of

the best persons is to grow in the open air, and to eat and sleep with the earth."

"You are of course a disciple of Borrow and Stevenson," she said. "And of Senhouse."

He frowned a little. "Of Petulengro and Robert Louis, yes," he assented. "But of Senhouse, no. He was a bit of a poser, don't you think? At least at the end with the bare feet and the white robe. It was a useless, posing life. I am not forgetting the flower planting, of course, but he might have done it all more simply. Now, this—a peddler's cart—is more useful. I really sell a lot of tin pans," he assured her.

"But your Robert Louis wrote an Apology for Idlers," she offered. In her eyes was disappointment, for she loved Senhouse.

"Oh, yes, that's true," he admitted. "But Stevenson himself was no idler. No, I want no apology for idlers. I want every man to have his work, and be faithful to it. I am a bit of a socialist, I think."

"So am I."

She looked up, all eagerness, to be met with an amused smile.

"With that?" He indicated the motor car below them.

She had the grace to blush. Then she grew indignant.

"Heavens," she cried hotly. "I don't *want* the money. I am going to give it all away where it will do the most good. My car is medicine for my soul. It does for me what your peddler's cart does for you—takes me away down the open road, away from the things I detest. I am weary to death of material things and of stuffy, conventional people who never think, who inherit their great-grandfathers' ideas along with their ancestral silver and portraits. They never really think, and suffer, and *live*."

With his own eyes flashing in sympathy, he watched her as she sprang to her feet and stood leaning against the great tree bole, her cheeks on fire, her eyes shining. She drew a long breath of the sweet forest air.

"Here I can breathe," she cried in ecstasy. "Here I can *live*."



But to be told what she should do by a tin peddler!

He sighed a little, as he looked at her for a moment in silence. Then, half absently, as though his thoughts were elsewhere, he admitted:

"Nothing can be done with such people stifled as they are with *things*, with possessions. They cannot awake out of their soul sleep until they are free of them, and get out into the sunshine—out where the realities of life are revealed. They are shut up in their

boxes of houses, in their stuffy, conventional, unreal existence." Then he grew enthusiastic, leaning forward, hands clasped about his knees, looking up into her face as she stood above him. "I should like to go about bringing them out into the light. I should like to be an apostle of fresh air, of living in the open, physically, mentally, and spiritually. If I had a fortune I would devote it to the work."

"I have the fortune." She sat down beside him all eagerness. "Tell me what to do."

She was quite unself-conscious, but for a moment he flushed darkly and bit his lip. He had remembered that he was a man and she a woman—that he was poor and that she was rich. It was only for a moment; then, absorbed in his cherished theories and ideals, with face inspired, he poured out all his plans. She sat rapt, her lips parted as he told her of the school he desired to found to train the youth of the country how to think, how to live.

As they talked—Donna Quixote and her inspired tin peddler—the shadows of the pines on the hillside grew longer and bluer, and suddenly she discovered that it was late.

"Oh, I must go," she exclaimed, and rose reluctantly. "And no one has come yet to our rescue."

"You wouldn't care, I suppose, to ride with me." He half hesitated, looking at her eagerly. "I could take you home, and we could send some one back for your automobile."

"Of course," she cried. "Thanks very much."

She packed her tea basket hastily, and stowed it away in the motor car, then climbed to the high seat of his cart. She looked as enthusiastic and eager as a child with a new toy.

"This is the best of all. It's a red-letter day—a day that appeals to my vagrant soul. I was wishing, just before I ran into you, that I could drive about the country in a gypsy cart. This is the next best thing to it."

He had picked up the reins, and they were jogging sociably down the road—the richest girl in the State, the peddler, and Pegasus, when out of a cloud of dust before them suddenly emerged the Van Astorbilts' big motor car full of people speeding home from the golf links. But even at the rate at which they were going, Lord Bungeigh and Tom Van Astorbilt recognized the astounding fact that Kathryn Van Doren was driving in a common peddler's cart, and the car was instantly stopped.

"Kathryn, have you had an acci-

dent?" some one called out. "Where is your car?"

Kathryn leaned out, her face radiant.

"Yes," she explained. "My car is stalled down the road. You will pass it in a minute. Don't touch it. I'll send Jenkins for it."

Tom Van Astorbilt and Lord Bungeigh both sprang up.

"Change places with me, Kathryn." Tom's whole attitude spoke disapproval.

"I say, Miss Van Doren, let us take you home, you know." Lord Bungeigh was glaring ferociously at the peddler. "It's very kind of this—er—person to give you a lift, but—"

Kathryn settled back more comfortably on her hard seat.

"Oh, no, thanks," she cried. "I am going to drive home with this gentleman. Au revoir."

She touched Pegasus lightly with the whip, then glanced back as they drove away, to smile at the astonishment and incredulity that were written large on all the backward-turning faces in the Van Astorbilt motor car.

The itinerant tin man was looking down at her with a new look in his eyes.

"Now that was really *noble* of you," he said. "And here I had always thought before this afternoon that you were probably a snob like all the rest of them. If only," he hesitated, and sighed. "If only you weren't so beastly rich. If only you were as poor as I."

She looked him steadily in the eyes, although the blood was mounting into her cheeks.

"I don't see why that makes the least difference in the world," she remarked. "Besides, I am not going to be rich any longer. I am utterly alone in the world, as far as relatives go. The money is mine to do with as I like—and I'm—I'm going to found that school. If I were poor—what?" she demanded boldly.

"When that day comes I shall have something to tell you," he said in a low tone, and did not meet her eyes.

They drove in silence through the sunset, the apple trees scattering their blossoms before them. When he turned

to her at last, the glow of the golden sky was on his face.

"I must confess to you, Miss Van Doren, that I am not altogether what I appear to be," he offered.

"I know," she smiled. "I recognized you almost at once, Professor Charlton. The magazines and newspapers have been too much addicted of late to articles on your experiment in studying sociology to have me not recognize you. I have a confession of my own to make." She flushed hotly. "You'll think me very bold, but—there was nothing in the world the matter with that motor car of mine."

When Miss Kathryn Dupont Van Doren married the eminent professor of sociology at Harton College, she was

no longer the richest young woman in the State. Instead, on a certain hillside rising above the Hudson, the corner stone had been laid for the great university of the future.

When the bride and bridegroom started on their wedding journey, the few friends who had witnessed the simple ceremony were astonished to see them drive away, not in a big touring car, but in something that bore a resemblance to nothing in the world so much as a gypsy cart. It was a sublimated gypsy cart, to be sure, and it was drawn by a horse answering to the name of Pegasus.

"We don't know where we are going," they called back, "but Donna Quixote and her itinerant tin man are going to take to the open road."



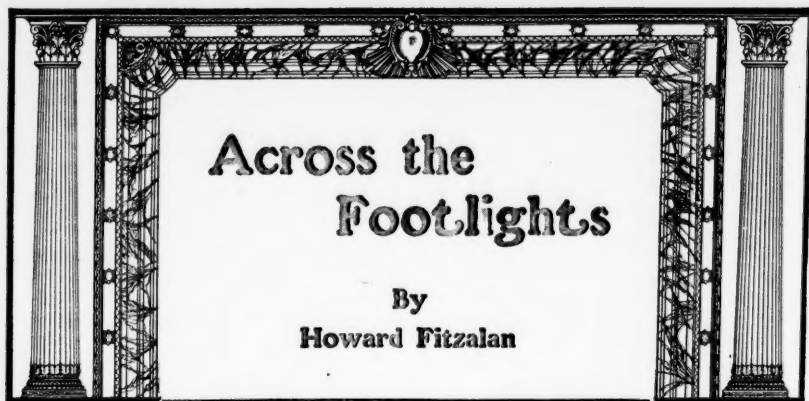
Lilacs

AROUND the corner from the adamantine highway,
A step beyond where track and car are booming,
You catch a faërie fragrance blowing down the byway—
And lo, a plot of green with lilacs blooming!

You who have seen the vineyards in their Tuscan brightness,
Or plucked the roses in a Persian garden;
You who have known the English hawthorn in its whiteness,
And you who dream and sing of fields in Arden,

Have never in your quest or in your dream beholden
A thing so fair and so beyond all knowing
As old, familiar lilacs with their memories golden—
Around the corner from the highway blowing.

WILLIAM F. MCCORMACK.



Across the Footlights

By
Howard Fitzalan

WHAT "EVERYWOMAN" DOESN'T KNOW.

IT is with considerable amazement that I have read the disapproving reports of the majority of the dramatic critics of metropolitan newspapers upon the modern morality play, "Everywoman." Perhaps they disapprove of morality; again, perhaps, they do not relish facts that hit so near home; certainly they failed to do justice to this magnificently staged sermon, this ruthless pictorial representation of woman's folly in her search for Love.

Perhaps the production was so pretentious that they expected another Goethe had arisen in the shape of its author, Walter Browne. True, "Everywoman" is no masterpiece, if one takes into account its somewhat barbaric hexameters, its more than occasionally inverted symbolisms, its too frequent use of puns; but the philosophy of it was true, and, occasionally, the author's visualization approached true inspiration.

It is an allegory; modeled on the old miracle plays, the first theatrical entertainments of Christian folk; somewhat akin, in conception, to "The Pilgrim's Progress," in that virtues, vices, and qualities generally are personified. *Everywoman*—a character—goes seeking Love, accompanied by her hand-maidens, *Youth*, *Beauty*, and *Modesty*.

In the playhouse—during the rehearsal of a musical comedy—*Modesty* is torn from *Everywoman*; and, in the following act, at a late supper among debauchees, and after *Everywoman* has been deceived by *Passion* into thinking him the King Love whom she seeks, *Beauty* dies.

While *Beauty* still lived, *Wealth* had sought to lure *Everywoman* into believing that he was Love, but she had rejected him. Now, disappointed and believing she will never find Love, she seeks to enmesh *Wealth*; but, *Beauty* dead, *Wealth* pushes her aside for *Vice*—for *Vice* is comely. As *Wealth* goes off with *Vice*, a funeral procession passes *Everywoman*—*Youth* has also died. Now *Everywoman* sends out a despondent cry; is no one her friend? There appears to her *Truth*, whose counsels she flouted in Act I, taking instead the advice of *Flattery*; then *Truth* appeared to be an ugly witch; now, in her friendless state, *Everywoman* finds *Truth* beautiful.

Truth leads *Everywoman* back to the home whence she came, and there she finds that Love, all the while, has been waiting for her.

It is to my mind a great benefit to the stage that "Everywoman" should have been produced. It sends folk from the theater thinking. One does not realize that it is a sermon for some time; there

is too much singing and dancing, too gorgeous a scenic investiture. The picture of Broadway on New Year's Eve, with its attendant throng, reflects great credit upon George Marion or Henry W. Savage, or whoever it was who conceived the idea and carried it out.

I should like to see "Everywoman" a yearly production; one that came, like Christmas, to remind us of many things we are apt to forget.

THE SUCCESS OF RUPERT HUGHES.

Industry and perseverance in the case of Rupert Hughes have at length found their reward. Ever since the days when the Berkeley Lyceum was temporarily called "Mrs. Osborn's Playhouse," Rupert has wooed Thalia, and Thalia has hitherto been ungrateful. Musical comedies, farces, dramas with a purpose, emotional dramas—he has given every one a chance; but, until "Excuse Me" was put on at the Gaiety, the public knew Rupert Hughes only as a novelist and a short-story writer; his plays had an odd trick of disappearing.

This was not because they were, of a necessity, bad plays. One in particular, "The Triangle," produced some years back when the old Madison Square Theater was an institution, received considerable critical praise; just as did David Graham Phillips' only dramatic effort, "The Worth of a Woman," which followed it at that theater, and which also failed of financial success.

However, Rupert has no similar cause of complaint in the case of "Excuse Me." An unpretentious farce, it drifted into New York one night, and the proprietors of the Gaiety Theater, after its first week, ceased to be concerned about any more attractions for their house this season.

Its entire story is unraveled on board the Overland Limited, from Chicago to San Francisco; and the rapid fun-making is more a matter of inventive incident than a plot. There is an eloping couple—a young army officer and his sweetheart—who must catch a transport for the Philippines; and who, de-

ciding to elope at the last minute, have not had time to get married; and frantically beseech the conductor at every stop to wait long enough for this to be accomplished. There is a bibulous gentleman and his wife—both bound for Reno and divorce—who happen to catch the same train, and become reunited en route. A minister, disguised with a carmine necktie, and his mouse-like wife on a holiday, and introduced for the first time to strong drink and cigarettes; and many other passengers—these latter typical, hardened travelers who do the sort of things chronicled in the comic papers. And, finally, two bandits hold up the train, "go through" the passengers, and are conquered—in a pleasant, thrill-like way—by the young army officer; who thus "squares" himself for the accidental appearance at Salt Lake City of a former sweetheart, who sports a bangle he once gave her; which has come near to terminating the affair between him and his fair companion eloper.

The sort of thing just set down might be multiplied again and again, and still the half of "Excuse Me" not be told. It defies the rules of play-making for this very reason; but "We Can't Be As Bad As All That," which conformed to them, was a dire failure, while this is a brilliant success. Features of the performance are the work of little Ann Murdock, the youngest of American leading women, and Willis P. Sweatnam, eldest of black-face character actors.

"THE BOSS."

But if Rupert Hughes is careless of dramatic traditions, Edward Sheldon is absolutely scornful of them in "The Boss." In this play, wound around the character of a corrupter of public morals—a part excellently realized by the star, Holbrook Blinn—Sheldon piles anticlimax on anticlimax, introduces speeches yards in length, and changes a man from a brutal slave driver to a philanthropist between acts.

And yet "The Boss" lives. It is breathing, vital, enthusiastic.

An Irish contractor, uneducated, mannerless, dishonest, falls in love with a girl of the upper classes, who is an earnest sociologist. To save her family from financial ruin and thousands of poor folk from losing their savings through the collapse of her father's banks, she marries this boss; he having suggested this compromise. She, however, consents to be that sort of a person heard of only in books and plays—a "wife in name only." The boss persists in his brutal dishonesty, his careless disregard of the poor. The brother of his "wife in name only" organizes a citizens' league to fight him. The boss is conquered by the brother; but the brother is murderously assaulted by one of the henchmen of the boss, and taken to a hospital close to death. A mob attacks the house of the boss; a warrant is issued for his arrest on charge of giving orders to murder the brother. Now, the boss has given no such orders; and the henchman has confessed to him; but his friendship for the henchman prevents him from saving himself at the other's expense.

While in jail he reforms and makes over his tenements and workmen's cottages to his "wife in name only," to give or lend to the poor folk who occupy them on any terms she desires. The henchman confesses; the brother does not die; and the "wife in name only" finds she really loves the boss.

An unconvincing play, altogether; yet somehow it grips. The boss, himself, is made likable by Mr. Blinn, the star; but that does not blind one to the fact that he is a brainless person in the real sense, with only the low cunning of the sewer rat; a man who rules by thuggery, and by taking advantage of the weaknesses of those he employs; who compels his workmen to buy second-rate liquor at his chain of saloons that he may doubly profit; a coarse, brutal, utterly objectionable person—that is, when Mr. Sheldon convinces you of his reality. In his treatment of the "wife in name only," he is a Chevalier Bayard, and makes mawkish appeals to our sentiments. His utter change in the last act fails to impress one as truth.

To glorify this sort of person, to attempt to translate his coarseness as manliness, his cunning as brains, his dishonesty and absolute untrustworthiness as mere faults of early education, is to me either due to youthful eyes that do not, as yet, see clearly into the hearts of men, or else a rampant immorality. Such plays tend to warp the viewpoints of the unthinking. There is in America to-day too much of a tendency to dismiss corrupt political and business deals with casual and laughing remarks about the "cleverness" of the people who engineer them. Really "clever" men do not need to be dishonest; such "cleverness" as men of the type of the boss possess is on a par with the cunning of animals.

Let us lay the blame, in this case, on Mr. Sheldon's youth, and pass on to a little playlet which recognizes the worthlessness of such men as the boss, and to an author who heaps scorn upon a condition of affairs that permits them prominence.

"THE TWELVE-POUND LOOK."

Mr. Barrie does not attempt to draw characters in so limited a space as thirty minutes of theatrical entertainment. He takes, instead, sane, intellectual principles, and puts them in the mouth of a woman stenographer and typewriter, who comes, accidentally, to the great Park Lane house of one *Sims*. This person, *Sims*, is about to be knighted. Probably he loaned money to the king or gave it to the Conservative party. He is a gross person, who, by utterly disregarding all the finer things of life, has made himself a millionaire. He has dressed up his spiritless wife in a coronation robe, girded a sword about his paunch, and the two of them are practicing court etiquette, against their presentation at court two days hence, when, after kneeling, they will arise *Sir Harry* and *Lady Sims*.

The stenographer who blunders in is the ex-wife of the future knight; and this is the first time he has seen her since, a decade before, she suddenly quitted him. He taunts her with what she might have been, *Lady Sims* instead

of a day laborer. She laughs. Finally she tells him how she despised him and his "fat" friends, their "fat" jewelry, their odious and vulgar "success." How, in the midst of luxury, she hired a typewriter and worked secretly until she had saved twelve pounds (sixty dollars) with which she bought a machine of her own, and then joyfully left him.

"If I were you," she advises him, "I'd watch my present wife for that 'twelve-pound look.' You think your diamonds, your Park Lane house, your servants, and your knighthood compensate her for your brutal disregard of all that is good in her? You think she values them at your price? Watch her eyes for that 'twelve-pound look,' Harry."

And, after she has gone out, laughing, the spiritless wife asks her husband whether typewriters are very expensive, looking wistfully after the departing stenographer. And, for the first time, *Sims* realizes that even she does not take his vulgar prosperity seriously—for in her eyes is "The Twelve-Pound Look."

It is a cameo, a perfect bit of dramaturgy, an eloquent bit of satire for an age that takes its money-making too seriously. It was flawlessly enacted by Ethel Barrymore, Mrs. Sam Sothern, and Charles Darnton. Mrs. Sothern—a sister-in-law of E. H. Sothern—is a newcomer to the American stage; but she brings to it exceptional qualities—perfect enunciation, smartness of dress, a distinguished bearing, and a knowledge of dramatic values that is rare.

MORE FAILURES AT THE GARRICK.

Speaking of that youthful viewpoint, there's nothing particularly youthful about Walter Hackett, and yet, in "Our World," which lasted for a week at the now ill-starred Garrick Theater, I found a childish cynicism too laughable for words; a near approximation to that bit of philosophy for its run of one consecutive night called "The Narrow Path." The world we live in is far from ideal—I hold no brief for it—but if it were as bad as this play would have us think, we'd all join a suicide club.

Even a fine cast failed to make "Our World" interesting.

"The Zebra" followed "Our World," and, though it stayed a little longer, had little excuse for being. In it Paul M. Potter forgot he was once a legitimate playwright—as witness "Trilby"—but remembered only the money that the salacious "Girl from Rector's" brought him. The piece reeked of pornographic innuendo, and one character—although excellently portrayed by Irene Fenwick—was an offense against good dramatic taste. It is not customary for Charles Frohman to err in this direction, nor was there any suggestion of Frohman supervision about the piece. It suggested, rather, Mr. Aaron Herman Woods; and, to "Al's" credit be it said, that he put on such pieces as these in compliance with popular taste, and not because he particularly relished them. A repetition of the plot of "The Zebra" would be out of place in the pages of this magazine; suffice to say, it was the sort of thing likely to appeal to sappy youths and bald-headed roués. Except for that of Miss Fenwick, the acting was unimportant.

This young lady, by the bye, was, until very recently, the wife of Felix Isman, the Philadelphia real-estate promoter and lessee of the Broadway Theater and others; and evidently Mr. Frohman—following his avowed belief that young and pretty girls are the only stars worth making—intends to raise her name in large electric letters presently; for she has had the leading parts this season in two other plays besides the "Zebra"; one of which was "The Brass Bottle," a very meritorious farce which, undoubtedly, would have succeeded had it not been miscast and mismanaged.

"SEVEN SISTERS."

The billing and the program of this production—the only one that Daniel Frohman has made in some time—state that Charles Cherry is the star; but critics, audiences, and folks in general—including myself—are of the opinion that Laurette Taylor's name should have this honor paid it. Not that Cherry fails to

do well what is given him to do; but his personality and abilities are not on a par with those of his leading woman.

The piece itself, adapted from the Hungarian by Edith Ellis, author of "Mary Jane's Pa," is a pleasant trifle that has to do with the efforts of a widowed matron to marry off her seven dowerless daughters. In Budapest or Berlin, where such a predicament is apt to be common knowledge, I can imagine that the machinations of mamma and daughters to entrap eligible suitors would be screamingly funny; in New York, where we cherish some sort of vague belief that prudent consideration of the financial prospects of fiancé and fiancée is mercenary, the farce is only mildly amusing; although I doubt Charles Cherry's right to figure as a star.

But there is no doubt concerning the stellar qualities of Laurette Taylor. Here are personality, ability to characterize, drollness, and a manner entirely unaffected by traditions. Once before—in "Jimmy Valentine" and in a far different sort of part—Miss Taylor came in for extravagant praise. I did not see her then, but in this case I wish to add my voice. As far as Cherry is concerned—he is an agreeable person, a desirable light-comedy leading man, but nothing more.

"Seven Sisters" is delightfully well cast. In a part quite unworthy of her abilities, Eva MacDonald, formerly leading woman in "Seven Days," deserves next mention to Laurette Taylor.

A ROMANTIC PLAY SET TO MUSIC.

To describe "The Balkan Princess" as a musical comedy would be to create a false impression. It is a Frank Curzon product; the peculiar blend one expects when buying admission to the Prince of Wales Theater; which is to say that it is romantic first and musical afterward; a well-bred sort of entertainment with beautiful gowns and scenic accessories, polite laughter, and a sort of a "Zenda"-*"Merry Widow"* story.

A princess must choose a husband from among a number of grand dukes

or else lose her kingdom. The only grand duke who appeals to her is a rebel, who inflames the public against her. Princess and grand duke meet, incognito, and love. Familiar enough story, isn't it?

But, in its new musical guise, it is decidedly one of the most attractive productions of the season. Louise Gunning, the star, as the princess, has beauty, magnetism, and a voice worthy of what is denominated "grand" opera. A complete surprise is the presence in the cast of Robert Warwick, erstwhile serious leading man, and last seen in the support of Leslie Carter; but Warwick turns out to have a very passable voice, indeed. Another recruit from the "legitimate" is Herbert Corthell, of "Seven Days" fame, the comedian who supplies most of the humor of the play.

On this point I wish to dilate perhaps a trifle more than may seem, at first glance, necessary; but the question has been so often asked: "Why do English musical successes fail so dismally here? Why are they so stupid, so dull?"

In England they have comedians skilled in pantomimic suggestion, and also humorists in their own right; folk who never study lines, but who say what they choose; "gag" or "ad. lib. it," as the professional description is. These comedians give a different performance every night, so far as their lines are concerned; and, besides, so skilled are they in mere "physical humor"—the raising of an eyelid, the twitch of a leg, the turning of an ankle—that they are not really dependent on their lines at all. In this country, except in burlesque, our comedians are generally dependent on their intonations; in other words, if there isn't a funny part written for them, they are despondently unfunny. That is why Broadway managers haunt burlesque performances in the hope of securing genuine comedians; and most of the real ones started in this lowly branch of the profession.

Herbert Corthell is one of them. Henry B. Harris found him on Eighth Avenue only a few years ago, put him

through a severe course in Broadway etiquette and prejudices, and shunted him into "Strongheart." It is because of his burlesque training that he makes the part of the waiter in "The Balkan Princess" so genuinely funny. But it is his own humor, almost every bit of it. If the Messrs. Shubert had secured some such person for "The King of Cadonia"—a piece by the same authors as this one, and quite as good—they would have had, instead of a dismal failure, just as great a success as "The Balkan Princess."

"The Balkan Princess" is, in fact, perhaps the best cast, most attractively scenically investured, musical piece that Broadway has seen this season, and it is the sort of thing that can be enjoyed by every one in the home from Millicent, aged four, to grandma, ætæ fourscore.

Very little, on the other hand, can be said of the Victor Moore starring vehicle, "The Happiest Night of His Life," which marks the début of Junie McCree—"The Dope Fiend" of vaudeville—as a librettist. George Cohan once utilized Victor as a mouthpiece for typical Cohanisms in "Forty-five Minutes from Broadway," and, later, extended the character, *Kid Burns*, in "The Talk of New York"—a sentimental slangster, a peculiar Cohan type. The "Yankee Doodle Comedian" no longer finds it necessary to appeal to so-called patriotism and the Broadway idea of manliness—which is coarseness—so he will perceive that I do not unjustly criticize when I state that he is the only man on earth who can make this sort of vulgarian "go" in a first-class theater. There is no place for this new Victor Moore show except in the popular-priced houses; at the Criterion it was a sad solecism, and did not last long.

And yet, somehow, even horseplay and slapstick humor can be made palatable to intelligent folk, as witness "The Hen-Pecks," the mammoth Lew-Fieldian composite at the Broadway, the great-grandsons of "The Midnight Sons." Lew Fields and his henchmen invented this sort of show; a combination of pantomime—as that word is ap-

plied to theatrical productions in London—vaudeville, circus burlesque, and musical comedy. Only the slightest bit of silk thread in the way of story binds together the many changes of scene, and that might as well be dispensed with, for it only recalls our sense of deduction which the songs, dances, and scenic effects have sent straying.

Briefly, these "revues" at the Broadway are the quintessence of New York caricature; they parody the fashions, comedies, tastes, and beliefs of the Manhattanese, and their laugh-making scenes are boiled down to the most primitive bones of humor—the physical disaster and pain of ridiculous people. I have never seen an audience roar more whole-heartedly and delightedly than at the inquisitorial work of Lew Fields, as a barber, upon Vernon Castle, as a customer. Myself, my sides ached. Yet the thing has been done in burlesque shows since the beginning of time. It is the cleverness of the performers in these productions that lulls one's belief that it is not dignified to laugh, and presently coaxes one into frantic palm beatings. But one unfavorable criticism can be made against the piece, another offense against good taste. Blossom Seeley, an absolute newcomer, but very nearly the star performer, is too clever to prejudice many against a suggestive song like "The Todolo Twirl," which is more suited to the "honkatonk"—or, at best, the burlesque theater—than to a production as pretentious as this one.

We were all glad to see Gertrude Quinlan back in her legitimate sphere; a half to three-quarters of an hour of Miss Quinlan as a "Manicure Lady" is a boon; as a star—I speak of the vanished "Miss Patsy"—there was a bit too much of her.

"The Hen-Pecks" has none of the dignity and high-class atmosphere of musical productions like "The Balkan Princess," "The Spring Maid," and "The Girl and the Kaiser," but such productions have their place, and can be heartily recommended to that fire-breathing destroyer of the drama—"The Tired Business Man."



What the Editor Has to Say

REALLY good mystery stories are the hardest thing in the world to secure, but once found interest a greater number of different sorts of people than almost any type of fiction. You remember, of course, Howard Fielding's serial, "The Great Conspirator." Since its publication we have been hunting for other mystery stories of the same interest. Next month, in the issue for July, will appear the first of a new series of stories by Virginia Middleton, entitled "The Trail of the Sheridan Heir."



WE think that you will find in this new series of tales something new and a little different from anything you have ever read in SMITH's heretofore. You will find the stories of absorbing interest and fascination, filled with movement, action, and incidentally with the charm that seems to be the peculiar accompaniment of a well-told mystery tale. The first of the stories, "The Affair of the La Shelle Pearls," will enlighten you as to the inner workings and plans of a certain group of smugglers, and make you anxious to read more of the stories. There are five splendid and exciting tales in this series, with a real plot running through the whole five, and with some surprising disclosures at the end. Each of the stories is in a measure complete in itself. They will appear in the next five numbers of SMITH's. Although "The Trail of the Sheridan Heir" is a serial feature, it is open to none of the objections made by those who don't like to

read serials in the magazines. It has all the good points of a serial, with none of the bad.



IMAGINE a girl who has, all her life, regarded her father as a pattern of all the virtues, who, after his death, finds that he has been engaged in dishonest business transactions, which, while keeping within the law apparently, have practically robbed one family of all their possessions. The girl in the case has high ideals of honor and honesty, and sets herself to the task of accomplishing everything in her power to undo the wrong of her father. This is the situation in which you will find the heroine of Louise Driscoll's new novel, "Reparation," which will appear complete in the next issue of SMITH's. The opening is interesting enough, but the interest grows greater as you go on with the story. It is a love story with a happy ending. Before you have reached that end you will have learned to care for and respect Grace Prescott as you do one of your own friends. She is not a puppet who moves mechanically as the strings are pulled by the author, but a real flesh-and-blood woman. She is only one of a number of humanly interesting people in one of the best stories you have read in some time.



DID you ever patronize a fortune teller? Most of us have at one time or another, either in the first stages of puppy love or at a later date

when prompted by an idle and cynical curiosity. Danny Meagher, the well-behaved shoe clerk in Robert Rudd Whiting's story, is young and in love. He cannot screw himself up to a proposal by word of mouth, but writes a letter which conceals rather than reveals the ardor of his affection. Then, not being above superstitious leanings, he consults a fortune teller. This adventurer into the shades of the future gives him the answer he wants, and Danny sallies forth hopefully only to receive a letter informing him of the mournful and surprising fact that he can never be more than a friend. Danny is properly downcast, and thinks of suicide and other methods of expressing his feelings. Words seem quite inadequate. Then things begin to happen with startling rapidity, and Danny is whirled through a series of happenings such as he had never dreamed in his wildest moments. You will read the story, which is one of the funniest we have ever read, in the next issue of SMITH'S.

IN "The Refining Influence of Woman," by Anne O'Hagan, is the story of a man married to a woman generally considered as being above him in station and culture. He is convinced that the experience will be a refining, uplifting influence in his life. His wedded wife shares this conviction to the fullest extent. Unequal marriages sometimes bring results little thought of or expected by the contracting parties. No one who did not know a great deal of married life in its actuality, and who had not a special discernment into the peculiar and varying characteristics of men and women in the marriage state, could have written this story of Anne O'Hagan's.

ALSO in the same number of the magazine is a charming love story by Alma Martin Estabrook, "The Several Convictions of Jeanne." This, instead of being a tale of married life, is the story of a girl who had determined never to get married, and who believed there was a career as an artist awaiting her. Her slow development, her change from girlhood to womanhood, her struggles, disillusionments, and disappointments are told delightfully. It is just another of those tales in which the characters come out of real life itself, human and lovable men and women, well worth knowing and reading about.

YOU are probably aware by this time that the inimitable Cap'n Sproul has started on a vacation, far from the haunts of men, and that he and his friend the judge are hunting the simple life with commendable enterprise and energy, but with dubious and sometimes alarming results. When you read "The Tinned Mr. Tozier," by Holman F. Day, in next month's issue, you will realize that this vacation trip gets funnier and funnier as it goes on.

THERE'S another funny story of life in a coeducational college by Edwin L. Sabin in the same number. There's a novelette of Western life by Mary Katherine Maule, who wrote the successful novel, "The Little Knight of the X Bar," and there are other good things by Charles R. Barnes, Wallace Irwin, Charles Battell Loomis, and others. If you enjoy the reading of this next issue as much as we have, we are satisfied.



The Care of the Arms and Hands

By Dr. Lillian Whitney

THE fashions of the day in sleeves ruthlessly expose what defects and blemishes the arms possess, and one wonders why women will not disregard the mode and wear sleeves that are less revealing. The kimono, the transparent, and the short sleeves are fascinatingly pretty on pretty arms, and if one must follow the whims of fashion, a good deal of attention should also be given the arms, so that the "tout ensemble" will delight the eye of all beholders; because our raiment is not merely a body covering; we dress to please, and mostly to please others. The airy, flimsy nothings, known as "lingerie waists," worn by most women during the warm weather, require an attractive background, otherwise they offend good taste.

A faultlessly formed arm, one that has the correct measurements at the shoulder, tapers down perfectly to a well-rounded, supple wrist, and ends in an exquisitely molded hand, is as rare as a perfect foot; but there are modifications of this type which are equally attractive—if well kept. Ah, there's the important point! Why is the skin upon the arm, especially the upper arm, so often unsightly, rough, coarse-grained, with dry, pimply eruptions? Is it from lack of bathing? Probably. The daily vigorous use of the bath brush, or loffa mitts, will prevent this condition from developing. On the outer, exposed parts of the arm the skin is somewhat thicker than elsewhere, and the surface circulation is less active. When these parts are neglected, therefore, the skin soon loses its smooth texture.

An admirable way to overcome any roughness at this situation quickly is to use powdered pumice stone. Rub very gently over the skin until the thickened

cuticle is removed, bathe in hot water, and apply a good bland cream. What is more unpleasing than a red arm peeping through a transparent bit of lace or embroidery? The circulation is probably at fault as a result of tight corsets and bands, or the digestion may be poor. Both conditions must be corrected before any local treatment can show results. To stimulate the local circulation, arm calisthenics before an open window, or entirely out in the open air, is the most satisfactory mode of procedure. All clothing must be unconfined; deep inhalations of pure air should be practiced while lightly swinging the arms backward, forward, and upward; although the use of dumb-bells or a wand is not essential, they add zest and imagination to the movements, and thereby heighten their effect.

A temporary whitener for external application on red or discolored arms is a great boon to many women who suffer in this respect.

LIQUID SKIN WHITENER.

Zinc oxide.....	¼ ounce
Tincture of benzoin.....	10 drops
Rose water.....	4 ounces

Shake well before using, apply with a bit of absorbent cotton, and allow to dry on.

Thin arms, if they are well shapen and well covered, are not objectionable, but scrawny arms are very unsightly. Short, plump arms are rather attractive, whereas those rolling in flesh are most gross.

To meet the various conditions that require treatment, either adding to or taking away tissue, there is nothing equal to massage in efficiency. It both reduces and develops. In order to

break up superabundant tissue, deep-seated massage is necessary; the flesh must be firmly grasped and rolled and kneaded under the fingers; pressure against the bony structure of the arms, and forcibly lifting the mass from its moorings, stirs up the parts, not only affecting a tremendous activity in all the vessels and glands in this and surrounding tissues, but imparting new life to the surface with the result that the entire contour of the arm improves, while the skin assumes a glow and velvety texture, that amply repays one for the trouble. Similarly a scrawny arm takes on form and roundness under gentle manipulation with a flesh-making cream.

TISSUE BUILDER.

Lanoline	2 ounces
Almond oil.....	2 ounces
Cocoa butter.....	2 ounces

Here is another and most delightful cream when made with fresh cucumber juice, which contains arsenic, and is, therefore, also a skin whitener.

MASSAGE CREAM.

Cucumber juice.....	2 drams
White wax.....	2 drams
Spermaceti	1 dram
Almond oil.....	3½ ounces
Oil of neroli.....	10 drops

Pure olive oil, or almond oil, perfumed with a few drops of one's favorite scent, makes a satisfactory skin food when used alone. Before applying any of these fats and oils, the skin must be put in condition so that it will absorb them. Bathing and cleansing it thoroughly of all surface matter with water as hot as can be borne, and with bland soap, will open the pores and allow them to drink in the skin food as it is gently kneaded into the tissues. After the massage, bathe the arms in cold water, thus closing the pores and further stimulating the circulation.

The elbow is one of the most abused as well as neglected parts of the body.



Remove growths from the hand with acid, blotting paper, and a camel's hair brush.

A dimpled elbow, or one that is soft and well rounded, is rarely seen except in infancy and early childhood. There is absolutely no excuse for reddened, pointed, sharply protruding elbows, or for those covered with rough and thickened cuticle, or even callosities, because all these conditions indicate abuse, rank abuse, of this long-suffering joint. The elbow was never intended by nature for use as a stump upon which to support the upper body while lounging in ungainly attitudes; nor as a prop on which to rest one's head and weight, a habit that is easily acquired by children over their studies—and regrettable to mention, over their meals—and once formed is apt to accompany one through life.

A suggestion for the immediate improvement of an unsightly elbow is, first denude the surface of all thickened skin with pumice stone, then bathe in hot water, and apply the following paste



Gentle massage with flesh-building creams adds roundness to the arms.

to the parts *on a bandage*, allowing it to remain on all night:

Myrrh	1 ounce
Yellow wax.....	2 ounces
Honey	4 ounces
Rose water.....	8 ounces

In the morning wash off with warm water, and rub a little bland oil into the parts. Keep up this treatment until the elbow becomes soft and round; of course, overcome the habit of using it as a crutch.

The bone on the outer side of the wrist is often too prominent for beauty. This is rarely the case, however, where the joint is flexible. Massage of the parts to limber up any stiffness existing in the soft tissues, with flexion, extension, and rotation of the hand upon the forearm, will soon result in a mobility of the parts that will add much grace to the manner in which the hand is used, and will eventually result in bury-

ing the bony prominence in the surrounding soft tissue.

And now the hands! What can we not say about these wonderful members, which are an index to our nature, our occupation, our innermost thoughts, our very lives? Some one has said: "Show me what a man eats, and I will tell you what manner of man he is," while the student of hands merely asserts: "Show me but your hand, and I will read your life's history."

Naturally, there are all sorts and conditions of hands, and the woman who uses hers in daily toil for the comfort and happiness of others has, in the estimation of most of us, more beautiful hands than she who selfishly fritters away her time, and spends most of it in self-admiration of her unblemished, idle, helpless hands. But the woman who works can also have attractive hands if she wishes to. It is only necessary to give a little thought and care to the matter, such as wearing appropriate gloves for the labor at the time—an old pair of kid gloves,

several sizes too large, for sweeping, dusting, and all dry work about the house; whereas rubber gloves should be worn for dish washing and the like.

Always after cleansing the hands—and this occurs over and over endlessly in the course of a day's cycle, and for that very reason this advice should be all the more heeded—after carefully wiping them dry, drop into the palms about a half teaspoonful of glycerine and rose water, rub it thoroughly into the hands and fingers, and by this means alone they can be kept soft and white. Many women keep a bottle of this preparation in several parts of the house, the kitchen, bathroom, etc., so that it is always convenient for immediate use:

FRENCH LOTION TO KEEP THE HANDS NICE.

Borax	1 dram
Tincture of benzoin.....	1 dram

Glycerine ½ ounce
 Rose water..... 6 ounces
 Mix, and allow to stand a day before using.

One often hears a woman exclaim as she is making preparations for an outing or for a visit: "I am in despair over my hands. I really dislike to appear among strangers, my hands look so badly." When a quick change is sought and almost instantly demanded, the use of cosmetic gloves is probably the best means of bringing this about. The following is an excellent

COSMETIC GLOVE PASTE.

Oil of sweet almonds.....2 tablespoonfuls
 Tincture of benzoin.....1 dessertspoonful
 Rose water.....1 tablespoonful
 Yolks of two fresh eggs.

Beat these ingredients into a stiff paste, and cover the hands well, then draw on a pair of loosely fitting gloves. Wear them during the night, and at any other time that is convenient.

For softening hands that have been neglected and roughened by housework, use a jelly made of:

Oatmeal1 pound
 Scraped Castile soap.....2 ounces
 Water enough to cover.

This is brought to the boiling point, and the hands are immersed in it—after the mixture has cooled sufficiently—for fifteen minutes; the cosmetic glove paste can then be applied, or if it is not convenient to wear the gloves at the moment, rub the hands well with the lotion given above.

To bleach them, equal parts of peroxide of hydrogen and water patted on the skin and allowed to dry in are efficacious.

Hands that are naturally thin, or that have become so through sickness, can be improved by massaging them with:

Cocoa butter.....1 ounce
 Oil of sweet almonds.....1 ounce
 Oxide of zinc.....1 dram
 Borax1 dram
 Oil of bergamot.....6 drops

The fats are melted first in a double boiler, the other two ingredients are then thoroughly beaten in, and lastly the oil of bergamot. This is one of the most satisfactory creams to use upon the hands, as it softens, whitens, and nourishes the tissues at the same time. It also does much to refresh old hands, removing wrinkles and imparting a healthy, youthful glow.

Blemishes mar the most shapely, well-preserved hand, and should not be tolerated for a moment. Warts and brown spots can be removed by home treatment; but moles and birthmarks must under no conditions receive any but a physician's care. Painting warts lightly with glacial acetic acid will cause their disappearance. The application should be made twice each day with a camel's-hair brush, holding a blotter close up to the wart so that none of the acid escapes to the sound skin. If it



Improve the elbow by applying beautifying creams upon a bandage, and wear during the night.

becomes "sore," omit a few applications, resuming again as soon as the soreness disappears. If the applications are properly made, the wart will be banished and no scar remain.

Brown spots can be effectually removed by using:

MILD BLEACH.

Pure honey.....	4 ounces
Glycerine	1 ounce
Rectified spirits.....	1 ounce
Citric acid.....	3 drams
Essence of ambergris.....	6 drops

Mix the glycerine and honey in a double boiler, dissolve the citric acid in the spirits, and add to the first two when they have cooled, beating all into a creamy mass with the essence.

This bleach can be bandaged onto the hands, or the arms, wherever unsightly brown spots offend the eye.

A lotion for red hands and one for moist palms is here given, while the discussion of finger nails must, unfortunately, be omitted until a future occasion.

FOR RED HANDS.

Muriate of ammonia.....	1 dram
Aromatic vinegar.....	1 ounce
Distilled water.....	1 quart
Mix.	

Use in sprinkler top bottle and apply several times daily.

FOR MOIST PALMS.

Tincture of belladonna.....	1 ounce
Cologne	3 ounces

This makes a nice preparation to carry in one's scent bottle, and can be applied to the hands in public places if it becomes necessary.

Dr. Whitney will be glad to answer, free of charge, all reasonable questions relating to beauty and health. Private replies will be sent to those enclosing a self-addressed stamped envelope. Address: Beauty Department, SMITH'S MAGAZINE, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York.

ANSWERS TO QUERIES.

JOHN: An ingrown toe nail may reach such a stage that only the surgeon's knife can bring relief. If yours has not advanced to this degree, lift the nail from the bed of flesh, and gently slip under it a small bit of absorbent cotton which you have first dipped into a solution of silver nitrate (40 per cent.). This solution will blacken the flesh and nail, and everything else it touches, but it will reduce the inflammation. The nail must be kept raised from the flesh by packing cotton under it until it is well.

MAY: Acid eructations can be relieved by taking a pinch of pure bicarbonate of soda in a glassful of water after eating. Charcoal tablets are also good, as they absorb the gases.

ALICE: Unusual pallor with perfect health is admired by some and regarded as a mark of beauty. This lotion may give you some color:

Liquid ammonia.....	1 dram
Glycerine	3 ounces
Rose water.....	4 ounces

Rub it into the skin briskly. I should also suggest deep breathing and long walks.

BILLY: I do not blame you in the least for wishing to improve your eyebrows. You will find the following preparation very helpful:

FOR SCANT EYEBROWS.

Tincture of cantharides.....	3 drams
Olive oil.....	4 drams
Oil of nutmeg.....	12 drops
Oil of rosemary.....	12 drops

Rub well into the eyebrows at bedtime.





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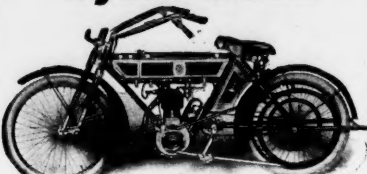
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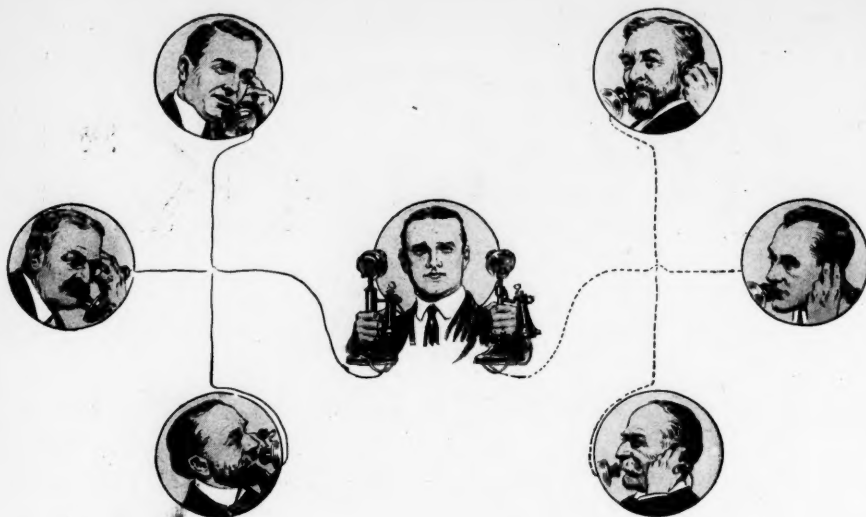
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